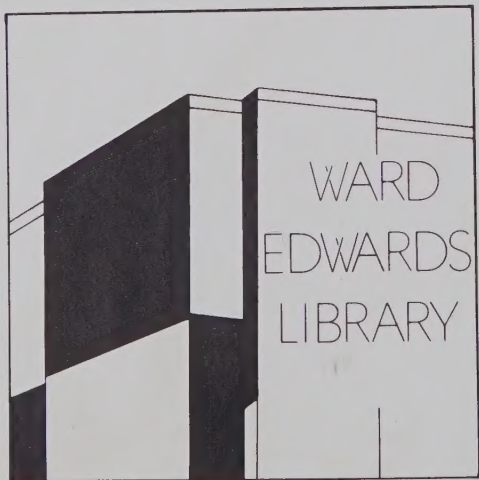




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GENERAL EDITORS
KENNETH BOURNE and D. CAMERON WATT

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1856-1914

EDITOR
DAVID GILLARD

Volume 3
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General Introduction

It is only in the last thirty years or so that historians have begun to realize the importance of modern diplomatic archives for other kinds of history than the history of diplomatic relations between two or more countries. The importance of the diplomatic correspondence of the Venetian republic for, among other things, the study of Tudor England has long been recognised. But the fact that European embassies and legations were required to report regularly on the domestic politics, the press, the state of the economy, the condition of minorities and so on, in the countries to which they were accredited and that the more primitive, inaccessible or incomplete the archives of those countries, the more important such reports could be to the historical study of those countries, is only just coming to be realised. In part, this is because of the necessity to acquire so many different languages over and above those necessary to study the non-European parts of the world. Few historians of twentieth-century China (outside Germany itself) are naturally likely to think a knowledge of, for example, German, useful to their studies. Yet the network of German consulates throughout China, the high standards of German diplomatic training, and the historical accident that made the Nazi government in Germany recognise and establish diplomatic representation with the Japanese-sponsored North Chinese governments make the reportage of those consulates of considerable importance to the study of China between 1931 and 1945. One of the first acts of the Israeli government after the establishment of the state of Israel was to microfilm substantial parts of the surviving records of the Imperial German Foreign Ministry between 1880 and 1914. Each German legation throughout eastern Europe was required to report regularly on the state of the Jewish question. With the wholesale destruction of the Jewish communities and of their records both by the ravages of the Nazis and of the war, these records compiled, heaven alone knows how wearily, by a procession of conscientious second secretaries in Bucharest, or Sofia, Belgrade, or Zagreb, Athens, Vienna and St. Petersburg became of the first importance to historians of the European Jewish forerunners of the Israeli people.

The British archives are even fuller and much less damaged by the ravages of war and time than the archives of any other major European power. Those of France were widely destroyed in 1940. Those in Rome are excellent on those parts of the world they cover; but much is omitted. The German records were divided by the accident of Allied occupation and their dispersal to escape damage by bombing. The Russian records are only intermittently open and only to favoured scholars. The British alone remain accessible and undamaged by bombing; and in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries British diplomatic reporting was world-wide in its coverage.

But the British archives contain one source that no other national archive can match, the product of a practice without exact parallel in the machinery of government of any other major power. This is the so-called Foreign Office Confidential Print. This comprises diplomatic despatches and other papers which, from dates varying from country to country but in general beginning in the 1850s, were printed for internal circulation within the machinery of British government. They went to the Queen or King. They were sent to major embassies abroad. They were circulated to other major departments of government. And, at a much later stage, the practice of printing papers for circulation was extended to the records of the Cabinet Office and those of the various sub-committees of Cabinet and the Committee of Imperial Defence, though these never became part of the F.O. Confidential Print. The India Office printed much of its own papers too. And there is a very extensive series of Colonial Office print. But the Foreign Office print was the first, and for the purposes of the general historian is by far the most important.

The earliest F.O.C.P. papers extant are texts of treaties and other similar international instruments, orders-in-council, government proclamations, consular notifications and so on, public documents for which printing was the easiest way of producing the multiple copies needed for the various British diplomatic missions abroad and ministries at home. Very little documentation has survived to enlighten us on how the process began, or who instituted the practice of giving them consecutive numbers. The fullest study so far undertaken, Dr. Lo Hui-Min's *Foreign Office Confidential Papers Relating to China and*

her Neighbouring Countries 1840-1914 (The Hague, Mouton, 1969) suggests that the introduction of the practice of printing papers was a response of the small post-Napoleonic Foreign Office to the enormous increase of despatches received after 1821, and that the system of numbering them and classifying them was introduced retrospectively by Edward Hertslet, the second and greatest of the Hertslet dynasty to hold the post of Librarian at the Foreign Office, a job which, until the reforms of the 1960s, was combined with that of Keeper of the Papers.

The Confidential Print is numbered from 1 to 20,000 and onwards. When a paper or collection of papers was ordered to be printed, it was given the next available number. An individual print number may cover a single document, of a single page in length. It may equally resemble a Blue Book and contain up to 500 pages of documents covering six months with a title such as 'Further Correspondence relating to Russia, Part V, January 1922-June 1922'. Not all documents printed were given numbers. Sometimes the same number was given to two documents ordered to be printed at the same time; occasionally, even three documents may be found bearing the same number. In most, though not quite all, of these cases, one of the pair will carry an asterisk after its number, or two asterisks if a third paper carries the same number. As a result of this practice it has proved for the time being impossible to ascertain whether any of the sets of Confidential Print preserved contains a complete run of the documents printed.

Most sets were bound into volumes classified by country, area or subject, as is the main set in the Public Record Office (F.O. 401 onwards). When the Foreign Office was faced with the need to reduce the bulk of its archives preparatory to handing them over to the Public Record Office, most of these sets were destroyed. Only two near-complete sets have survived. One of these is in the Public Record Office; the other is still in the Foreign and Commonwealth Library. Five other imperfect sets survive. The most full of these is in the National Library of Australia in Canberra. This set provides good coverage for the period up to the end of 1921, but nothing beyond that. The second set is in the University Library at Cambridge. It is fairly complete up to 1914, but thereafter presents ever larger gaps. The third, which covers only the years 1914-1920 (Print Nos. 10,601-12,000), is in the National Library of Scotland. A fourth, still more imperfect, is at the British Library. The fifth set, which is also in the P.R.O. (F.O. 881), is a simple numerical series, from 1 to 10,600, covering 1829 to c. 1914.

The decision whether to print a particular document was usually a political decision; that is to say, it was taken at a senior level on the political side of the Office. The execution of the decision was the responsibility of the Library. The decision frequently covered papers which had originated outside the Foreign Office or the diplomatic stations abroad. When a document was ordered to be printed, indication was also given as to whom it should be circulated. From 1906 onwards print was divided into two classes, viz:

- (i) Papers of general interest.
- (ii) Papers printed for ease of circulation, of interest only to particular departments of government or posts abroad.

The first class of paper was restricted to papers considered to be of a really important or interesting nature, and were further classified into A or B categories. Papers in this class were sent to the reigning monarch and his or her heir apparent and to such Cabinet ministers as the Secretary of State might designate. They were further circulated to the Under Secretaries in the Foreign Office and to all heads of Foreign Office departments belonging to the diplomatic establishment of the Office. They were also sent to all British embassies and legations abroad who received Foreign Office bags by a safe channel. Papers which belonged to the second class were sent only to Departments and posts specially interested in the subject they covered, and were not distributed generally.

During the years of the 1914-18 war the regular process of printing broke down rather badly. The wartime series falls into five quite separate categories: Public documents, orders-in-council, etc. dealing with those areas, Chinese Customs, Moroccan finances, etc., where vestiges of the international system of government established before 1914 survived; minutes of important committees on contraband, the blockade, the blacklist, etc.; a separate subject section simply entitled 'the War'; some few country series outside the area covered by the war which therefore continued unbroken (a few continue past 1914 but end in 1915 or 1916); and lastly a considerable volume of documents produced by or for the Political Intelligence Department (P.I.D.) of the wartime Foreign Office.

With the establishment of the British Empire delegation in Paris as a kind of advance guard of the Foreign Office in London, and with the development of British and Allied intervention in Russia, these five categories are succeeded by four rather different ones. The place of the minutes of the Blockade Committee and its fellows is taken by the records of the British Imperial delegation to the Paris Peace Conference and of the Conference Secretariat. The memoranda from the P.I.D. covering conditions in and making prognostications about the course of developments in Germany, Russia and elsewhere continue and are added to by occasional forward-looking memoranda emanating from other government departments such as the India Office and the War Office. There are a number of documents dealing with the reform of the Foreign Office, instructions emanating from the Department of Overseas Trade to Consular offices abroad, the reorganisation of filing procedures and similar changes in administrative practice. The 'country' and 'area' series,

Persia, North America, etc., which broke off publication in or after 1914 begin publication again. New series, e.g., Eastern Affairs covering pre-1914 Ottoman-administered territories and the Arabian peninsula, are initiated. The last and most curious category consists of 'files' of documents with minutes, all from the Northern Department, each covering from two to ten or more telegrams, reprinted with a note of summary of the contents of each 'file' and the minutes of the officials' commentary on the documents up to and including the Foreign Secretary, Lord Curzon, himself. The practice is limited to the years 1919-1921, and to the files of the Northern Department. The telegrams include a great many from War Office-appointed delegates, usually military men, attached to or observing the various White Russian, Finnish, Baltic, Siberian, Caucasian or other non-Bolshevik forces engaged in the Russian civil war or in the post-revolutionary conflicts along the frontiers of Imperial Russia. Some of the official minutes suggest this practice was instituted as part of Lord Curzon's particular concern with the future of Imperial Russia's territories; others suggest that monitoring Mr. Churchill's 'private war' against Bolshevism came to command the attention and hostility of Lord Curzon and his officials. Whatever the reason the practice was abandoned once the British withdrawal from the territories of pre-1914 Imperial Russia had been completed and the 'commissions' in the Baltic States transformed into legations.

By the end of 1921 all these various categories of material have largely disappeared, at least as separate prints, and the publication of the print has resumed its pre-1914 division into 'country' and 'thematic' collections. There was to be an almost continuous arrangement and rearrangement of the print from the smaller European countries as the departments which dealt with the affairs of central, south and southeastern Europe shuffled and reshuffled their responsibilities. The advent of war in 1939 led to further changes. But, at the present time of writing, the Confidential Print remains restricted beyond 1939, so that this question does not arise. Some of the interwar series, notably dealing with inter-Imperial affairs, proved extremely disappointing on inspection, and have been omitted from our selection *in toto*.

The Confidential Print does not of course reproduce the whole, even of the papers of the Office's political departments. They do not constitute the 'archives in print'. With the exception of the Northern Departmental 'Files' printed in 1919-1921, it is only on the rarest occasions that the minutes that accompanied each document in its jacket from the junior desk official up to the top levels of decision-making are reprinted. The individual document, once a decision to print it had been taken, was usually sent for printing by the head of the department who received it direct from the registry, before he turned it over to his juniors for comment and for the drafting of a reply. The Print contains very few drafts, and those only where the drafts were ordered to be printed for a specific purpose. It does on the other hand sometimes contain the only surviving copy of Foreign Office materials where the originals failed to survive the vagaries of the 'weeding' system as it was practised in the inter-war years and beyond, that is before the weeding process was systematised and placed in the hands of officials of the requisite judgement and seniority to do a properly responsible job of the reduction of the archives to manageable dimensions before they were transferred to the care of the Public Record Office. What the Print lacks in conveying the atmosphere of the Office it compensates for in the marvellous picture it gives of the countries, capitals and governments to which British diplomatic posts abroad were accredited.

The editors have been faced with a set of very complex considerations in deciding on the criteria by which the truly enormous quantity of documents printed could be reduced to the scope of the 400 or so volumes projected for this series. A very substantial number of Foreign Office documents have already been printed—in the nineteenth- and twentieth-century series of Blue Books presented by the Foreign Secretary to Parliament, in the two great historical series produced by the two world wars, *British Documents on the Origins of the War*, edited by G.P. Gooch and H.V. Temperley, and the four series of *Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939*, in *British and Foreign State Papers* and in other collections of Parliamentary Papers. Since all these are readily available it has seemed largely otiose to reprint them. There are however important areas of British diplomatic activity not covered by any of these series, especially the documents printed during the first world war and the records of the British Empire Delegation to the Paris Peace Conference. These have in fact been separated into two subject series which stand at the division between the overall responsibility of the two editors-in-chief, one on *The War 1914-1918* and one on *The Paris Peace Conference of 1919*. There are other important areas of autonomous British diplomatic activity such as the Middle East, Latin America, Africa, etc. which have received little or no attention from the editors of the official series. Due attention has been paid to the publication of these documents in the appropriate area or subject series. But the editors have tried to reprint as much as seemed feasible of the printed material dealing with the domestic politics of the principal state or states covered in each area series and their relations with and policies towards countries other than Great Britain. Each series will carry a special introduction by the editor responsible for that series explaining the principles of selection employed in its production.

A work on this scale could not have been produced without the assistance of many others apart from those responsible for the editorial work on the individual series. The editors-in-chief are particularly grateful for the assistance provided by the staffs of the

Public Record Office, the Cambridge University Library, the National Library of Scotland and the National Library of Australia. Their thanks are due to their individual research assistants, to Michael Partridge for the series that ends on 4 August 1914, and to John Herman for the series that ends on 3 September 1939. They have received continuous and essential assistance from the secretarial staff of the Department of International History of the London School of Economics and Political Science of which they are both members. To all of these, the editors-in-chief would like to express their thanks.

London School of Economics

Kenneth Bourne
D. Cameron Watt

May 1983

Note on the Presentation of the Documents

Since the documents reprinted here are selected from much larger collections and arranged in specially designated series, they have been given new piece (document) and page numbers and the original numbers deleted. However, the F.O. registration number and despatch number, wherever present in the original, have been retained, beneath the new piece number at the top left hand corner of each document, and the original piece number, if any, will be noted, along with the C.P. number, in the Lists of Contents. Inclosures have been identified as such and have been given new piece numbers, but the original inclosure numbers (if any) have been deleted.

The quality of the reproduction of the documents reprinted here reflects the quality of the original Print. Considerable care has been taken to ensure that our edition of the Print is legible, and the reader should be aware that the quality of the original Print was never perfect and, in fact, has deteriorated due to the passage of time. No effort has been made to correct typographical errors that appeared in the original Print. Amendments and corrections that were made by hand in the original Print have been reproduced. Cross-references to other documents have been retained, and where these documents have been reprinted in the present series, the volume and new document number are indicated by an editorial note. New editor's notes appear in brackets and are identified by the words 'Editor's note'.

Introduction

The terms 'Near East' and 'Middle East' lack geographical precision and constancy, but they are convenient shorthand for areas that defy the usual division of the world by continents. Linking the two as 'The Near and Middle East' has the added advantage of avoiding the awkward question of where one begins and the other ends, but the editorial question of where one series begins and another ends has to be answered more precisely than normal usage requires. The heartland of the area is, by common consent, south-west Asia and north-east Africa, and civilisations originating there are called Near Eastern or Middle Eastern civilisations. One of these civilisations, Islam, had for a thousand years prior to the period covered by this series dominated a much more extensive area. In 1856 Islamic governments controlled most of the Balkans, most of north Africa and almost the whole of western and central Asia. I have taken this whole area of Islamic rule to be the Near and Middle East in 1856, but once an area outside the heartland of south-west Asia and north-east Africa has been lost to Islamic control I have excluded it from further consideration.

The Near and Middle East has, therefore, been given limits which change substantially between 1856 and 1914. It consists of the Ottoman Empire, even where its rule was little more than nominal, Arabia, Persia, Afghanistan and the independent khanates of central Asia. Once fully independent, a Balkan country like Serbia in 1878 ceases to be regarded as Near Eastern since it is no longer controlled in any sense by a Near Eastern power, and it reverts to being in Europe where the conventions of geography would normally place it. Once the independent Muslim khanates of central Asia, on the other hand, cease to be independent because they have come under Russian control either by annexation or as vassal states, they become a proper subject for the Russian series. The process whereby the limits of the area change is in this way sharply defined.

Whatever its limits, two themes are predominant in the Near and Middle East during these years, namely, those of European encroachment and of modernisation. The rivalries of powerful and expansionist European governments led to the virtual exclusion of the Ottoman Empire from the Balkans, to the conquest of central Asia, to the establishment of European rule in Egypt, the Sudan, Tunis, Tripoli and Cyprus, and to the partitioning of Persia into spheres of influence. The manifest military and economic superiority of Europe led to imitative and hasty 'modernisation', which had further severely disruptive political effects by undermining the traditional authority of rulers who introduced it and at the same time set in motion social and economic changes that were to affect the lives of everyone in the Near and Middle East sooner or later. The British Foreign Office Confidential Prints which follow have been selected with a view to illuminating these two themes.

The intention is not, therefore, to provide a documentary narrative covering every major event in the period, but to offer detailed illustration of certain developments and crises, or even phases of certain crises, especially germane to these themes. The Prints thus selected are very mixed in character. Some are important in the conventional sense as clarifying the ideas and decisions of major political figures remote from the area itself, some are of value for what they reveal of direct contact between the humbler representatives of rival civilised traditions; some are based on eyewitness accounts of sensational events, some consist of statistical material painstakingly collected over a period of years by the men on the spot. Priority has been given to hitherto unpublished documents, but to exclude documents merely because they can be found elsewhere, often in abridged form, would reduce the usefulness and convenience of the series; this is especially true of the runs of correspondence in the earlier volumes dealing with Balkan and other crises, where many items available in Blue Books are needed for continuity and coherence.

The first ten volumes of the series deal with the Ottoman Empire and Persia from the end of the Crimean War until around 1885. The Prints of letters, telegrams and memoranda emanating from the Foreign Office in London during that period indicate the distinctively conservative approach of British governments to these parts of the Near and Middle East. Preservation of relatively weak states, susceptible to British influence and pressure, astride the communications and approaches to India was the simplest and most economical way of protecting imperial interests in Asia. This general aim underlay British policies in respect of

Christian revolt in Syria and the Balkans, of the Suez Canal project, of the Reuter Concession and of its very limited war to check Persian aggrandisement. The Prints which record views of British representatives abroad as to the policies pursued by other major European governments suggest persistently ambivalent attitudes towards the area's future. The Near and Middle East was of strategic or economic or diplomatic importance to all the other Powers. All could perceive possible benefits from changes in the status quo; at the same time, all could perceive dangers if a redistribution of power was more to the benefit of a rival. The response of Russian, Austrian, German, French and Italian governments to crises in the Ottoman Empire is shown to have involved at least acceptance and sometimes active encouragement of change, but change of a controlled and collective kind. The common ground which they and the British government could share was the demand for administrative reforms beneficial to the Sultan's Christian subjects and financial reforms beneficial to the Sultan's European creditors. Reform was seen by British policy-makers and diplomats as an aid to Turkish survival and stability, by other governments as a means of slowly undermining the Ottoman Empire and of staking future claims without precipitating a sudden collapse and consequent scramble.

By the end of the period covered in the first ten volumes the British had, in effect, failed to secure their interests through a policy of sustaining the Ottoman Empire. The reasons for the failure emerge from the reports of British representatives in the area. Ambassadors and consuls record a process of change within the Empire which it was, in part, British policy to promote, but which was beyond British power to control. External demands for administrative reform excited Christians and alarmed Muslims, and the role, unofficial or otherwise, of French agents in Syria and of Russian, Austrian and Italian agents in the Balkans in encouraging revolt is angrily reported by British agents mostly sympathetic to the Porte, yet critical of its capacity for misgovernment. The inherent dangers to British policy, disastrously realised in the revolts, atrocities and wars of 1875-78, meant a demand for detailed and graphic accounts of life in the Empire's towns and villages, which the consuls met in their voluminous despatches and telegrams. These accounts are of interest over and above their value in explaining international developments, and they have been given at least as much prominence as the policy-making and diplomacy which called them forth. So, too, have the reports throughout the series of life in other parts of the Near and Middle East subjected to European interference and influence, which had equally profound though less immediate consequences. At one level these flowed from the aid, private and official, to rulers in Egypt, Tunis and Persia as well as at Constantinople, ambitious for a modern state and its appurtenances and for the wealth, prestige and power they were expected to bring; they flowed from the loans and technological expertise of foreign governments and concessionaires, together with military advisers and weapons, which, in the event, weakened rather than strengthened the recipients. At another level, there were less spectacular but equally important developments in the campaigns against the slave trade and against epidemic disease. The former kind of modernisation aroused great parliamentary interest and was so fully reported in the Blue Books that only some representative documents have been thought necessary here, but some of the reports on disease by men like Surgeon Major Colvill in Mesopotamia and the controversy they evoked are less well-known and have been included as an interesting chapter in the history of medical science.

With regard to Afghanistan and central Asia the British were ambivalent as to effecting change in much the same way as were the other Powers towards Turkey, and by 1885 British respect for Ottoman and Persian integrity had also become conditional and ambiguous. As well as containing reports on the process of modernisation and conditions of life throughout the area, volumes eleven to twenty deal with spasmodic British attempts to regulate the affairs of Afghanistan and its neighbours from the eighteen-seventies onwards in response to Russian expansion, and with growing British participation in the interventionist policies of the Powers in the Ottoman Empire and Persia.

Apart from quoted remarks of foreign politicians, diplomats and journalists, the documents in the Confidential Prints, of course, see European encroachments and the processes of modernisation and revolutionary upheaval through British eyes. They were often written in disturbing circumstances of conflict and rivalry, and they were inevitably one-sided in their critical comments on the activities of other governments and of their representatives. They were written by men thoroughly confident of their own moral and political superiority, and the consuls were especially frank and outspoken in their commentaries. At the same time, most of the men on the spot were remarkable for their fascination with what they saw, for their power of detailed observation and even for a degree of detachment and a capacity to understand, through long years of experience, Islamic and other viewpoints fundamentally different from their own. The Confidential Prints, indeed, are valuable not only for the information they record about controlled dismemberment and uncontrolled modernisation in the Near and Middle East, but also for the unconsciously expressed values and assumptions of those agents who transmitted it.

NOTE

The texts of the selected Prints have been reproduced without any alteration of misprints or of other flaws, but where the date of a document or the name of its author has obviously been misprinted the correct version appears in the table of contents. Some now discarded versions of Islamic and Russian names have been amended for the sake of clarity in the tables of contents, which also give dates only in the Gregorian style for the same reason. In the introduction, tables of contents and chronological table I have, however, referred to 'Persia' rather than 'Iran', to 'Constantinople' rather than to 'Istanbul', and I have used 'Ottoman' and 'Turkish' interchangeably to conform with the usage in the documents which follow. I crave the indulgence of Turkish and Iranian readers in so doing.

Chronological Table

1856	18 February	Hatt-i Humayun promulgated for Ottoman reform
	30 March	Treaty of Paris
	25 October	Persian capture of Herat
	November	British declaration of war on Persia
1857	26 January	British alliance with Afghanistan
	4 March	Conclusion of peace between Britain and Persia
	August	Osborne Pact: Franco-British agreement on Moldavia and Wallachia
	September	Unionists win elections in both Moldavia and Wallachia
1858	23 December	Abdication of Alexander of Serbia; restoration of Milosh Obrenovich
1859	January-February	Cuza elected prince in Moldavia and in Wallachia
	29 April	Work begun on Suez Canal
1860	9 July	Damascus massacre
	3 August	European intervention in Lebanon agreed
	September	Michael Obrenovich succeeds Milosh in Serbia
1861	9 June	Reorganization of Lebanon settled
1862	16 June	Bombardment of Belgrade
1863	May	Dost Muhammad's forces capture Herat; death of Dost Muhammad
1864	25 August	Agrarian reform law in Roumania
	3 December	Gorchakov's circular on central Asia
1865	17 June	Russian capture of Tashkent
1866	23 February	Cuza overthrown in Roumania
	14 April	Charles of Hohenzollern proclaimed prince of Roumania
	23 September	Serbo-Montenegrin alliance
	September	Cretan insurrection and demand for independence
1867	April	Turkish troops evacuate Serbia
	26 May	Serbo-Roumanian alliance
	26 August	Serbo-Greek alliance
1868	14 May	Russian capture of Samarkand
	10 June	Assassination of Michael of Serbia
	30 June	Russian peace treaty with Bukhara
1869	11 July	New Serbian constitution
	17 November	Opening of Suez Canal
1870	11 March	Bulgarian Exarchate established
	31 October	Russian repudiation of Black Sea restrictions
1871	13 March	Russian repudiation confirmed by London conference
1872	25 July	Abortive concession by Persia to Reuter
1873	24 August	Russian protectorate over Khiva
	28 September	Russian protectorate over Bukhara
1874	June	Proposal for Russian rail concession in Persia
1875	July	Insurrection in Herzegovina
	November	British purchase of Khedive's Suez Canal shares
	30 December	Andrassy Note

1876	2 March	Russian annexation of Khokand
	2 May	Caisse de la Dette Publique established in Egypt
		Insurrection in Bulgaria
	13 May	Berlin Memorandum
	30 May	Deposition of Sultan Abdul Aziz
	30 June	Serbia declares war on Turkey
	8 July	Reichstadt Agreement
	31 August	Deposition of Sultan Murad V; Abdul Hamid succeeds
	18 November	British and French controllers appointed to Egyptian finance departments
	12 December	Constantinople Conference opens
1877	23 December	Ottoman constitution proclaimed
	15 January	Budapest Convention
	18 January	Turkish rejection of Constantinople Conference proposals
	5 February	Dismissal of Midhat Pasha
	19 March	Opening of first Ottoman parliament
	24 April	Russia declares war on Turkey
1878	10 December	Fall of Plevna
	3 March	Treaty of San Stefano
	4 June	Cyprus Convention
	1 July	Albanian League formed
	13 July	Treaty of Berlin
	November	British invasion of Afghanistan
1879	January	Russian mission to Persia to form Cossack brigade
	29 April	Bulgarian constitution proclaimed at Tyrnovo
	16 May	Treaty of Gandamak
	26 June	Deposition of Khedive Ismail
	3 September	Massacre of British mission in Kabul
1880	4 September	British and French Controllers-General appointed in Egypt
	17 July	Law of Liquidation for settling Egypt's debt and finances
1881	1 February	Arabi leads a military demonstration in Egypt
	12 May	French protectorate over Tunis (Treaty of Bardo)
	18 June	Three Emperors' Alliance
	13 July	Alexander of Battenberg revises Bulgarian constitution
	9 September	Further military demonstration in Egypt
1882	11-12 June	Alexandria riots
	11 July	British bombardment of Alexandria
	September	British occupation of Egypt
1883	1 May	Organic Law for reform of Egyptian government
	19 September	Tyrnovo constitution restored in Bulgaria
	5 November	Mahdi's victory in Sudan (battle of El Obeid)
1884	February	Russian annexation of Merv
1885	26 January	Fall of Khartoum and death of Gordon
	30 March	Russo-Afghan clash at Penjdeh
	18 September	Union of the two Bulgarias proclaimed
	13 November	Serbia declares war on Bulgaria
	17 November	Defeat of Serbs at Slivnitsa
1886	20 August	Overthrow of Alexander of Battenberg
1887	12 February	First Mediterranean Agreement
	22 May	Drummond Wolff Convention
	4 July	Election of Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg as prince of Bulgaria
	12 December	Second Mediterranean Agreement
1888	29 October	Suez Canal Convention
	30 October	Shah opens lower Karun River to commerce
1889	30 January	Reuter obtains concession for Imperial Bank of Persia

1890	8 March	Talbot obtains concession for Imperial Tobacco Corporation in Persia
1891	28 December	Tobacco concession cancelled after riots in Persia
1894	June	Dismissal of Stambulov
	August-September	Massacre of Armenians in Asia Minor
1895	11 March	Russo-British agreement on Pamirs boundary
	15 July	Murder of Stambulov
	October	Further massacre of Armenians
1896	February	Insurrection begins in Crete
		Reconciliation of Russia and Bulgaria
	1 May	Assassination of Shah of Persia
	September	Reform programme agreed for Crete
1897	February	Cretan insurrection resumed
	17 April	War begins between Greece and Turkey
1898	2 September	Battle of Omdurman
	19 September	Meeting of Kitchener and Marchand at Fashoda
	October	German Emperor's visit to Constantinople and Palestine
	3 November	French government orders evacuation of Fashoda
	November	Turkish troops evacuate Crete
1899	19 January	British-Egyptian condominium over Sudan
	21 March	Franco-British convention on Nile valley
	November	Baghdad Railway concession
1900	January	Major Russian loan to Persia
1901	May	D'Arcy's oil concession in Persia
	September	Death of Abdur Rahman; Habibullah succeeds as amir of Afghanistan
1902	December	Opening of Aswan Dam
1903	August	Macedonian insurrection
	October	Mürzsteg programme of reform for Macedonia
1904	8 April	Franco-British convention
1906	5 August	Shah concedes constitution for Persia in face of popular revolt
1907	31 August	Russo-British convention
	December	First Egyptian nationalist congress
1908	23 June	Shah overthrows the Persian constitution
	July	Revolution in Ottoman Empire; restoration of 1876 constitution
	16 September	Buchlau Conference
	5 October	Bulgarian independence proclaimed
	6 October	Austrian annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina
	7 October	Cretan union with Greece proclaimed
1909	27 April	Deposition of Abdul Hamid
	10 May	Restoration of Persian constitution
	16 July	Deposition of Shah of Persia
	August	Revision of Turkish constitution
1910	April	Insurrection in Albania
1911	May	Shuster arrives in Tehran to reform Persian finances
	June	Turkish concessions to Albanians
	September	Italo-Turkish war; annexation of Tripoli
	November	Russian occupation of northern Persia
	December	Persian National Assembly closed down; Shuster dismissed
1912	April	Italian bombardment of Dardanelles
	May	Italian occupation of Rhodes
	18 October	First Balkan War begins
	28 November	Albanian independence proclaimed
	17 December	London Conference opens

1913	30 May	Treaty of London
	29 June	Second Balkan War begins
	21 July	New constitution for Egypt
	11 August	Treaty of Bucharest
	November	Beginning of Liman von Sanders crisis
1914	15 June	Britain and Germany settle Baghdad Railway dispute
	2 August	Turkish alliance with Germany
	4-5 November	Russia, Britain and France declare war on Turkey
	18 December	British protectorate over Egypt

Doc. 1

The Earl of Derby to Consul-General White.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, August 14, 1876, 5.15 P.M.

HER Majesty's Government will not propose mediation unless asked for, but you may suggest to Prince Milan that an application from him to the Powers for their good offices would be favourably received by England.

Doc. 2

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received August 25.)

(No. 109. Political.)

My Lord,

Belgrade, August 17, 1876.

IN my despatch No. 91, Political (marked Confidential), I had the honour to report to your Lordship, on the 5th instant, the language held by me to persons connected with this Government, who were trying to obtain from me some indication as to the probability of Her Majesty's Government undertaking a mediation in their favour.

Subsequently M. Ristich called upon me, and in speaking of the turn affairs were taking, he intimated that the prospect of a termination of hostilities would be greatly advanced if he could obtain some reliable information as to the intention of the Powers to restore to Servia the *status quo ante bellum* unimpaired.

I have since ascertained that M. Ristich made a similar application on the same day to my Italian colleague, Count Joannini, from whom he received more encouragement, and that a reply highly favourable to the preservation of the *status quo ante* was received from M. Melegari.

M. Kartzoff says that he spoke several times to Count Joannini, and that he considered it advisable that the Italian Government should initiate some such mediation.

There are also other indications of a singular friendship having suddenly arisen between Russia and Italy since Prince Humbert's visit to St. Petersburg.

After receiving your Lordship's telegraphic instructions on the 15th instant (No. 102, Political), I saw Mr. Ristich twice, and after much conversation he led me to believe that the advisableness of applying to the Powers for their good offices was under consideration; that he was delighted to think that Her Majesty's Government were favourably disposed to such a step on their part; that the Emperor of Russia had expressed a wish for peace in a telegram addressed to Prince Milan, congratulating him on the birth of an heir; and that, therefore, he saw no difficulty whatever in this course being adopted.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Doc. 3

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received August 25.)

(No. 111. Political.)

My Lord,

Belgrade, August 18, 1876.

I SAW Prince Milan yesterday afternoon by appointment, and nothing could be more reassuring as to his Highness' wish to see the war terminate than his language to me.

He assured me that he was about to take advantage of the suggestions made to him, and to apply for the good offices of the powers as soon as some matters of detail had been settled between him and his Ministers. His language was even stronger than that of M. Ristich; and he spoke in the same sense subsequently on the same day to my French and to my Italian colleagues, so as to leave no doubt on our minds as to the sincerity of his peaceful inclinations.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE

Doc. 4

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received August 25.)

(Telegraphic.)

St Petersburg, August 25, 1876.

PRINCE GORTCHAKOW informed me this morning that he had just received a telegram from Belgrade announcing that last evening, with unanimous assent of all the Cabinet, Prince Milan had asked the good offices of the Powers to obtain armistice.

Prince Gortchakow had instructed Russian representatives at great courts to support any similar proposal made to the Porte by the Powers.

His Highness observed that an armistice will, of course, include Montenegro and the insurgent provinces.

Doc. 5

The Earl of Derby to Consul-General White.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, August 25, 1876, 7:30 P.M.

HER Majesty's Government have received with satisfaction your telegram of the 24th. I will at once communicate with the other Powers, with a view to obtain an armistice.

Doc. 6

*The Earl of Derby to Lord Lyons.**

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, August 25, 1876, 8 P.M.

IN reference to Mr. White's telegram of the 24th, Her Majesty's Government are ready to join in applying to the Porte for suspension of hostilities. Inform the Government to which you are accredited, and ascertain what view they take.

Doc. 7

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, August 25, 1876, 8 P.M.

I SEND copy of a telegram which I have addressed to Mr. White, and of another which I have sent to the Embassies.†

You will point out to the Porte the extreme importance of not losing this opportunity of restoring peace. If hostilities continue, interference of some of the Powers seems probable, and the consequences might be fatal to the Turkish Empire.

Doc. 8

Mr. Macdonell to the Earl of Derby.†—(Received August 29.)

(Telegraphic.)

Berlin, August 29, 1876.

GERMAN Ambassador at Constantinople is directed to support demand for a general suspension of hostilities, applying to Montenegro and the insurgent bands as well as to Servia.

Doc. 9

Mr. Macdonell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received August 29.)

(Telegraphic.)

Berlin, August 29, 1876.

M. DE BULOW states that instructions have been sent to German Ambassador at Constantinople to join the other Representatives in demands for a cessation of hostilities.

As to steps to be subsequently taken, German Government is not ready at present to express an opinion; but they consider it in the interest of the Porte to take into account antagonistic feeling manifesting itself in Russia, as well as in Germany and other countries, which points to necessity of question being settled on basis of *status quo ante*.

Doc. 10

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received August 29.)*

(Telegraphic.)

(Confidential.)

St. Petersburg, August 29, 1876.

PRINCE GORTCHAKOW told Italian Ambassador on Sunday last that the Servian victory effaced all question of modification of territory, and that the *statu quo* territory

* A similar telegram was sent to Berlin, St. Petersburg, Rome, and Vienna.

† Nos. 302 and 303. [Editor's note: These are Docs. 5 and 6 in this volume.]

‡ Repeated to Embassies.

would be preserved. He probably alluded to the understanding with Count Andrassy at Reichstadt.

Doc. 11

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(Telegraphic.)

(Confidential.)

Foreign Office, August 29, 1876, 11.55 P.M.

I THINK it right to mention, for your guidance, that the impression produced here by events in Bulgaria has completely destroyed sympathy with Turkey. The feeling is universal and so strong that even if Russia were to declare war against the Porte, Her Majesty's Government would find it practically impossible to interfere. Any such event would place England in a most unsatisfactory situation. Peace is, therefore, urgently necessary. Use your discretion as to the language which you shall hold; but you will see how essential it is that the Turkish Ministers should be alive to the situation, and that you cannot be too strong in urging upon the Porte a conciliatory disposition.

Doc. 12 Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received August 30, at night.)*

(Telegraphic.)

St. Petersburg, August 30, 1876, 4 P.M.

PRINCE GORTCHAKOW has addressed urgent advice to Prince of Montenegro to join in the appeal of Prince Milan for an armistice.

His Highness thinks that for the moment an armistice alone can be negotiated, as the conditions for peace can only be fixed after an understanding between the six Powers.

Doc. 13 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received August 30, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, August 30, 1876, 3.15 P.M.

THE Prince of Montenegro has expressed to Count Andrassy, through an Austrian Agent accredited to his Highness, his desire to see a cessation of useless bloodshed, and to be included in the mediation of the Great Powers requested by Servia.

His Highness has addressed a similar intimation to Russia, and, having requested Count Andrassy to act for him with reference to the Powers who have no Agents at Cettigné, his Excellency has requested me officially to convey the expression of his Highness' wishes to your Lordship.

His Excellency added that the Prince reserves to himself the right to explain his views later, as he considers himself, after the success of his arms, to be entitled to better terms than may be granted to Servia, more especially as his troops still occupy semi-independent districts on frontier of Herzegovina.

Doc. 14 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received August 30, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Strictly Confidential.)

Vienna, August 30, 1876, 4 P.M.

I WAS informed to-day by Count Andrassy that he is greatly embarrassed by the number of Russians passing through Austria-Hungary to Servia. He has called the Russian Ambassador's attention to its inconvenience, to its abuse of the Geneva Convention, and to the risk of its leading to Russian intervention, to which he can never assent.

Doc. 15 Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 3.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Very Confidential.)

St. Petersburg, September 2, 1876, midnight.

THERE is an evident desire on the part of Prince Gortchakow to support any proposal of England, rather than be drawn in the wake of Austria. The wish of Austrian

* A similar despatch was addressed to Consul-General White.

Minister for Foreign Affairs from the very commencement has been to keep the lead in his own hands, and to prevent collective action of the six Powers.

I have reason to believe that it was his influence which restricted the drawing up of the Berlin Memorandum to the six Powers, and his present opposition to a Conference may be explained on the same grounds.

I suspect that he is pursuing an interested policy, for which, under certain conditions, he obtained the acquiescence of Russia at Reichstadt, but which would be defeated by collective action of Powers, and would certainly not be assented to by a European Conference.

The present crisis is one of serious gravity. The opening for peace now offered can be only successfully utilized by collective action of the Powers, and by a European Conference, which would at once calm the intense excitement in this country in favour of the Servians. No other means will prove effectual to restore peace and order in the troubled districts, and if not speedily adopted, very serious European complications may result.

Doc. 16 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 3, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, September 3, 1876, 5.20 P.M.

I HAVE formally made to the Porte the communication directed by your telegram of the 1st.

Grand Vizier is unwell, but I have seen Midhat Pasha and the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

The feeling among the Ministers and the public is strongly against the acceptance of an armistice, which is regarded as altogether favourable to Servian interests.

They say that if the remainder of the season during which military operations will be possible is lost in an armistice, while Servians continue to receive reinforcements and supplies from Russia, their own position will be intolerable.

They would be ready to treat for peace on moderate terms, but cannot suspend their operations till they know the basis of it.

Doc. 17 Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 4.)
(No. 383.)

My Lord,

St. Petersburg, August 29, 1876.

I RECEIVED this morning your Lordship's telegram of the 28th instant, stating that Her Majesty's Government had no official information that Prince Nicholas of Montenegro was willing to treat, or that he had authorized Prince Milan to speak in his behalf in the appeal he made for a suspension of hostilities, and inquiring whether the Russian Government would counsel him to do so.

As Prince Gortchakow leaves Czarakoe Selo to-day, accompanying the Emperor to Warsaw and the Crimea, M. de Giers had been called to Czarokoe to take leave of his Highness, and on calling at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, I was only able to see the director of his Chancellery, who could give me no information on the subject.

I may, however, inform your Lordship that Prince Gortchakow told the Italian Ambassador and myself that he considered the suspension of hostilities was to be general, including Montenegro, Bosnia, and Herzegovine.

I am told that another difficulty has arisen at Constantinople, namely, that none of the Powers who have accepted Prince Milan's appeal have yet taken the initiative in drawing up the form of application to be addressed to the Porte for a suspension of hostilities, the instructions to the Representatives having merely empowered them to support a proposal of that nature. I am also told that Austria and Germany have not yet signified their assent to the Servian requests.

This delay in submitting to the Porte a formal appeal for the suspension of hostilities may be of grave importance, as in the meantime military events may occur which may change the pacific disposition of Prince Milan and of the Prince of Montenegro, and tend to nullify or render ineffectual this favourable opening for peaceful negotiations.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Doc. 18 Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 4.)

(No. 386. Very Confidential.)

My Lord,

St. Petersburg, August 29, 1876.

I HAVE already reported to your Lordship a mysterious phrase which Prince Gortchakow used to me and my colleagues soon after his return. It was in reference to the meeting at Reichstadt. The phrase was, "that he had come to a perfect understanding with Count Andrassy 'pour toutes les éventualités,'" declining, at the same time, to give any explanation of the nature of this understanding.

The "secrecy" which Prince Gortchakow attaches to this understanding is naturally calculated to excite curiosity, if not suspicion. The Chevalier Nigra, the Italian Ambassador at this Court, informs me that he profited of an opportunity to question Prince Gortchakow on this subject. He observed to his Highness that, in a question regarding general European interests, and at a moment when it was so desirable for the maintenance of peace that there should be a common understanding among all the Powers, a secret and mysterious understanding between two of the great Powers outside the European concert must naturally give rise to suspicion.

Chevalier Nigra, at the same time, observed to the Chancellor that since the meeting at Reichstadt, the idea of annexing Bosnia, or a portion of it to Austria, had been much discussed by the European press, and more especially by the semi-official Austrian press, and he therefore was anxious to learn from his Highness whether the understanding with Count Andrassy (to which he had alluded) "pour toutes les éventualités," included within the *rayon* of these eventualities any territorial changes of the nature referred to.

Prince Gortchakow replied, if not in the following terms, in language similar to it:—

"Je ne peux pas m'expliquer sur cette question," at the same time adding, "qu'il pourrait bien avoir quelques rectifications de frontière dans certaines éventualités."

The Chevalier accepted this reply as tantamount to an acknowledgment of some agreement implying an annexation of territory, and made an observation to Prince Gortchakow in this sense.

His Excellency then observed to Prince Gortchakow that he had supposed it to be generally understood that none of the Guaranteeing Powers should seek any separate or special advantages in solving a question of European interest, and that, moreover, the "*status quo territorial*" had been the basis on which all the Powers had hitherto agreed to act. He then proceeded to say that if any territorial changes were made to the advantage of any of the Great Powers, the disinterested policy of those Powers would be called in question, and that Italy, which was a Mediterranean Power, and had vital interests in the Adriatic, would, under such circumstances, consider herself justified to put in her claims.

Italy, Chevalier Nigra observed, could never allow any aggrandizement of a Great Power at the expense of Turkey without claiming an equal compensation.

Prince Gortchakow hereupon remarked, "Oh! oui, je vous comprends. Vous parlez du Tyrol et du frontière. Mais est-ce que vous ferez la guerre pour cela?" to which Chevalier Nigra replied: "Quant à cette question, je garde la même réserve que votre Altesse; je ne m'explique pas."

This conversation, which has been related to me by Chevalier Nigra, proves that some understanding was come to between Prince Gortchakow and Count Andrassy, which, in certain eventualities, implied the annexation by Austria of Bosnia, or of the Catholic portion of that province, with the sanction of Russia.

I have reason to believe that the eventualities thus calculated upon have not occurred, and that, consequently, the secret compact between the two States is not likely to be put into execution.

It is a proof, however, that if European complications of a grave nature are to be avoided, they can only be avoided by the maintenance of the "*status quo territorial*" in the East; for if once the principle of annexation is admitted, it will be the commencement of the dissolution of the Turkish Empire, and there will be more claimants than one for the division of the spoil.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Doc. 19 Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 5.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Paris, September 5, 1876.

DUC DECAZES, who is likely to be absent for another week, has sent me message to say that on receipt of my letter of 2nd, he telegraphed to French Ambassador at Constantinople to support proposal for an armistice, which Sir H. Elliot was instructed to make by your telegram of the 1st.

Doc. 20 Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 5.)

(Telegraphic.)

Belgrade, September 5, 1876.

TURKISH turning movement appears partly successful, but the Servians intend defending all the retrenched positions, as the carnage on both sides continues great. An armistice extremely desirable with a view to avoid mutually fresh obstacles to reconciliation.

Doc. 21

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 546. Most Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 5, 1876.

FOR your guidance as to the language to be held by you to the Turkish Ministers in the present juncture, it is right that you should be accurately acquainted with the state of public opinion in England on the subject of Turkey.

It is my duty to inform you that any sympathy which was previously felt here towards that country has been completely destroyed by the recent lamentable occurrences in Bulgaria. The accounts of outrages and excesses committed by the Turkish troops upon an unhappy, and for the most part unresisting population, has roused an universal feeling of indignation in all classes of English society, and to such a pitch has this risen that in the extreme case of Russia declaring war against Turkey, Her Majesty's Government would find it practically impossible to interfere in defence of the Ottoman Empire.

Such an event, by which the sympathies of the nation would be brought into direct opposition to its Treaty engagements, would place England in a most unsatisfactory, and even humiliating position, yet it is impossible to say that if the present conflict continues the contingency may not arise. The speedy conclusion of a peace, under any circumstances most desirable, becomes from these considerations a matter of urgent necessity.

Her Majesty's Government leave it to your Excellency's discretion to choose the arguments which you shall employ, but you will see from what I have stated how essential it is that the Turkish Ministers should be made alive to the position in which the conduct of their own authorities has placed them, and you will understand that you are warranted in using the strongest language, should occasion require it, to enforce upon the Porte the expediency of a pacific policy, and of moderation in the terms to be proposed.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 22 Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 5, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

St. Petersburg, September 5, 1876.

WITH reference to Sir H. Elliot's telegram reporting the objection of the Porte to an armistice, it is my duty to inform your Lordship that a refusal by Turkey of an armistice will so inflame public opinion in this country, that I fear Imperial Government will be driven to intervene in favour of Servia.

By a refusal of armistice, therefore, Porte will risk far more danger than any possible disadvantage which it may anticipate from its acceptance.

Porte might be induced to yield if it were informed of this, and that a European Conference would meet immediately on their acceptance of armistice to bring about a peace on the basis of the *statu quo* territorial.

*[Editor's note: Footnote is lacking in the original print.]

A war indemnity may be claimed, and not unjustly, from Serbia; but an agreement might be come to that it should be devoted to rebuilding villages burnt, and rehabilitating the fugitive population in their homes, under the supervision of an international Commission.

I doubt if Russia will agree to a peace with Serbia, separate from Montenegro.

Doc. 23 Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 5, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Confidential.)

St. Petersburg, September 5, 1876.

I LEARN indirectly from an official [of the] secret proclamation of the Emperor that a war manifesto is expected to be issued in a few days.

I cannot guarantee this information, but I have confidence in the source from which it came.

Doc. 24 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 5, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, September 5, 1876.

I FIND that such of my colleagues as I have spoken to do not attach importance to the distinction pointed out in an earlier telegram to-day between suspension and cessation of hostilities

Your Lordship may, perhaps, think distinction undeserving of notice. I drew attention to it on account of strong objection of the Porte to a mere armistice.

Doc. 25 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 5, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, September 5, 1876.

ALL my colleagues yesterday made their communications to Minister for Foreign Affairs in support of proposed mediation, except French Ambassador, who will make his to-day.

The Austrian Ambassador had instructions to ask, at the same time, that the Porte should make known conditions of peace to which it pretends; the French Ambassador is instructed not to touch upon that point, and the others are, I believe, without instructions on the subject.

I am told that, at Council of Ministers on Sunday, the general tone was very much against the acceptance of armistice, and it seems impossible to convince them of the risks to which they will expose themselves by a refusal.

Many believe that Russia is determined on war, which would begin in still more unfavourable conditions at expiration of an armistice.

Some continue to flatter themselves that Europe will not stand by and permit an unprovoked aggression upon Turkey by Russia, and refuse to listen to warnings that they are deceiving themselves.

Doc. 26

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 6, 1.30 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Confidential.)

Vienna, September 6, 1876, 11.30 A.M.

I BELIEVE it originated with Count Schouvaloff, who appears to have concluded, from an answer given to him in explanation of your Lordship's instructions to Sir H. Elliot, that, if Russia considered it necessary to intervene, England would not oppose her.

I expressed disbelief that your Lordship had made any such declaration on the subject; but I did not encourage conversation, as I wished first to look through the correspondence.

Doc. 27 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 6.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, September 6, 1876, 3 P.M.

TELEGRAM received yesterday from Austrian Ambassador stated that the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs in declining proposal for an armistice, promised to submit the conditions of peace in a few days to the Powers, which Count Zichy believes will stipulate for garrisons and right to construct a railway to Belgrade.

Doc. 28 Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 6.)

(Telegraphic.)

St. Petersburg, September 6, 1876.

I BEG to offer the following observations in reply to Sir H. Elliot's telegram of Monday night.

My reference to policy of Count Andrassy did not relate to his object in substituting Austrian for Russian influence over the Slavs, which is natural and legitimate, but to a secret understanding which I believe was concerted with Prince Gortchakoff at Reichstadt to annex three-quarters of Bosnia in certain eventualities.

Regarding a Conference, I may observe that Europe has had sufficient experience of Turkish delay in the attainment of peace. An European Conference in autumn last year would have saved the Porte and Europe from the present state of affairs.

When peace is restored, an European Conference will be no longer necessary, but I have no hesitation in expressing my conviction that without an European Conference no peace will be obtainable, and, further, that without such Conference there is imminent danger of a war between Russia and Turkey, which may involve all Europe.

A Conference may be strictly limited to the deliberation of certain given points, beyond which no discussion is allowed.

Collective Europe may stay the nearness of the war and prevent its extension; by its mediation Europe may give fresh vitality to the Turkish Empire, but if the war continues—and I see no possibility of Turkey arresting it alone—the Oriental question will arise in its full intensity, and the very existence of Turkish rule in Europe will be at stake.

Doc. 29 Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 6.)

(Telegraphic.)

Belgrade, September 6, 1876.

TURKISH forces appear now sufficiently numerous to be able to advance, leaving Alexinatz and Deligrad aside. It seems Porte might, without inconvenience, consent to armistice limited to a fortnight, so as to give time for the settlement of the basis of peace, which Servia would be happy to accept on the *status quo ante*, if allowed to do so by Russia.

Doc. 30 Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 11.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Confidential.)

St. Petersburg, September 11, 1876, 1.30 A.M.

I AM privately informed from an authentic source that Field Marshal Manteuffel was charged by the German Emperor to convey to the Emperor Alexander assurances of His Majesty's entire support on Eastern question.

Doc. 31 Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 11.)

(Telegraphic.)

St. Petersburg, September 11, 1876, 4 P.M.

RUSSIAN Consul-General at Ragusa has telegraphed as follows to Prince Gortchakow, dated yesterday, from head-quarters of Prince of Montenegro:—

“Prince of Montenegro, on receiving intelligence from Servia that the Porte rejects armistice and will make its own conditions of peace—hostilities being continued—has addressed a note to agents accredited to him, in which he requests their Governments

to consider an armistice as an indispensable prelude to peace. The military position of Montenegro precludes a dictation of peace by the Porte, whose conditions will probably be unacceptable.

His Highness, therefore, requests the Six Powers to address a formal demand to the Turkish Government imposing armistice, and to meet immediately in Conference to decide, in concert with Principalities and Turkey, on the question of peace, and the future position of the Christian population in Turkey. Prince hopes the Powers will take his request into consideration, and act promptly thereon."

Doc. 32 Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 11.)

(Telegraphic.)

St. Petersburg, September 10, 1876, 11.30 P.M.

A DEMONSTRATION took place yesterday at Moscow in favour of Servians. 10,000 persons assembled at the railway to witness the departure of persons charged to convey a Greek chapel and its sacred appurtenances to General Tcherniaieff.

They afterwards proceeded to the Governor's house in procession, and sang a religious hymn.

Expressions of dissatisfaction were heard against the Emperor Alexander and the Government for their supineness in behalf of the Servians. No disorder took place.

Doc. 33 The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, September 11, 1876, 4.4 P.M.

FRESH outrages are reported to have been committed by Turkish troops in Servia on women and wounded men. Ascertain through Sir A. Kemball whether there is any truth in those reports.

If true, make strong representation to the Porte.

Doc. 34 The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, September 11, 1876, 4.45 P.M.

HER Majesty's Government can only speak in their own name and cannot answer for the opinions that may be put forward by other Powers, but the following provisions seem to them proper to form the basis of a pacification, and I have communicated them as such confidentially to the Russian Ambassador :—

The *status quo*, speaking roughly, both as regards Servia and Montenegro.

Administrative reforms in the nature of local autonomy for Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Guarantees of a similar kind against mal-administration in Bulgaria. The exact details of these might be discussed later.

Any modification of Treaty of Paris unfavourable to Servia, resumption of right to garrison Servian fortresses, or deposition of Prince Milan, are regarded by us as inadmissible.

*Doc. 35 The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.**

(No. 566. Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 11, 1876.

THE Russian Ambassador called upon me this afternoon, and asked me whether Her Majesty's Government had received information of the rejection by the Porte of the proposal for an armistice.

I replied that we had no positive intelligence to that effect, though your Excellency's reports did not leave us much hope of the proposal being accepted.

I then stated to Count Schouvaloff, in confidence, the terms which, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, might properly form the basis of a pacification, and I authorized him to communicate them to his Government.

* An identic draft was addressed to Lord A. Loftus, except the last paragraph.

They were, I said, the following :—

The *status quo*, speaking roughly, both as regards Servia and Montenegro.

Administrative reforms, in the nature of local autonomy for Bosnia and the Herzegovina.

Guarantees of some similar kinds (the exact details of which might be reserved for later discussion) against the future maladministration of Bulgaria.

Her Majesty's Government would regard as inadmissible any modification of Treaty of Paris unfavourable to Servia, resumption of right to garrison Servian fortresses, or deposition of Prince Milan.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 36 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 15.)

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, September 15, 1876, 11.45 P.M.

THE following are the conditions submitted by the Porte to the appreciation of the Powers :—

1. Prince of Servia to pay homage in person to the Sultan at Constantinople.
2. The four fortresses given into the keeping of Servia by Firman to be re-occupied by Turkish troops.
3. The militia to be abolished, and the military force to be maintained in the Principality not to exceed 10,000 men and two batteries of artillery.
4. In accordance with the stipulations of the Firman, Servia to send back emigrants from the border Provinces ; and, with the exception of the fortresses which existed in Servia *ab antiquo*, all fortifications subsequently constructed to be completely destroyed.
5. If Servia is unable to pay the indemnity, the amount of which is to be hereafter determined, the tribute now paid by the Principality to be increased by the interest on the sum represented by the indemnity.
6. The Turkish Government to have the right of making and working, either through its agents or by a Turkish Company, the railway which is to join Belgrade with the Turkish line.

I have sent above to Belgrade.

*Doc. 37 The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.**

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, September 15, 1876, 3.45 P.M.

YOU will understand that by the phrase "local or administrative autonomy," as applied to Bosnia and Herzegovina, nothing more is intended by Her Majesty's Government than a system of local institutions, which shall give the population some control over their own local affairs, and guarantees against the exercise of arbitrary authority. There is no question of the creation of a tributary State.

Doc. 38 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 15, 1.23 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Confidential.)

Vienna, September 15, 1876, 12.53 P.M.

FROM the language of Count Andrassy yesterday and from that of the Russian Ambassador, Russia appears decided to insist on an armistice being imposed on the Porte by the fiat of the Powers. Count Andrassy said he had agreed to support this Russian view against his own opinion that the armistice and the peace should form one question, because he understood all the other Powers had adopted it.

Is it wise or humane, however, to prolong the war in order to inflict a humiliation on Turkey or to incur the risk of complications which would follow the Porte's refusal of such an ultimatum as Lord A. Loftus has indicated if an armistice can be obtained in the manner proposed by Sir H. Elliot ?

Doc. 39

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 15, 5.30 P.M.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, September 15, 4 P.M.

THE substance of the answer of the Porte having been received from Count Zichy, he has been instructed to state that its proposals are inadmissible, and to urge the Porte to grant an armistice immediately, after which the Powers will be ready to consider any proposals it may put forward.

Doc. 40

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 16.)

(Telegraphic.)

Paris, September 16, 1876.

THE Russian Chargé d'Affaires has communicated to the Duc Decazes a telegram from Livadia dated yesterday evening, saying that Turkish insolence exceeds all that could be expected, and expressing the hope that the Powers will take a firm attitude, and one consistent with their dignity. The Chargé d'Affaires also tells Duc Decazes that Russia regards the answer as an affront, and entirely separates the question of Turkish conditions from that of armistice.

Doc. 41

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.†

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, September 16, 1876, 1 P.M.

IN supporting the proposal for a suspension of hostilities, Her Majesty's Government must not be considered as acquiescing in the terms of peace proposed by the Porte. Some of them, as you will have seen by my previous telegrams, are in our opinion quite inadmissible. You should make this clear in any communications you may have with the Porte or your colleagues.

Doc. 42 *Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 17.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Belgrade, September 17, 1876.

I HAVE communicated to Servian Government the orders issued by the Porte to her military commanders, and in consequence of my representations I am assured that similar instructions to Servian commanders were to be sent this morning; reliable information thus conveyed by me has been their inducement to act thus, and therefore I am most anxious that no occasion of a misunderstanding should arise. With a view to this it might be desirable that the Turkish Commander-in-chief should acquaint Servian General of his instructions, and that both sides should be pledged not to resume hostilities without previous notice.

Doc. 43

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 17.)

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, September 17, 1876, 11 A.M.

WITH reference to the telegram from Mr. Malet, repeated by your Lordship yesterday, reporting that the Italian Government consider that as Russia is determined to accept nothing but the armistice, the orders of the Porte to stop hostilities are not sufficient, I would point out to your Lordship that the proposal made to the Porte was not for an armistice, but for a suspension of hostilities, which has been obtained.

Care was taken here to adopt the latter expression, for which the Duc Decazes had declared a strong preference to Lord Lyons.

The Russian Chargé d'Affaires made no great objection, but said his Government considered that it ought to be for three months, thus affording evidence that they did not intend or wish that peace should be quickly made.

* Repeated to Embassies.

† Repeated to the Queen and to Embassies.

Doc. 44 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 17.)

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, September 17, 1876, 4 P.M.

IN reply to my inquiries as to alleged outrages by Turkish troops in Servia, Sir Arnold Kemball telegraphs that there can be no truth whatever in reports of outrages on women or children by Turkish troops, because the villages are invariably found quite deserted. Some helpless men and women who had been abandoned were kindly treated and sent to Nisch.

Doc. 45 Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 18.)

(No. 396. Very Confidential.)

My Lord,

St. Petersburg, September 2, 1876.

I HAVE observed on several occasions in conversation with Prince Gortchakow a great desire that England should take the initiative in proposing an armistice, and in convoking an European Conference. I have reason also to believe that Prince Gortchakow has endeavoured on more than one occasion to move the Italian Government to take some initiatory step in the foregoing sense, in case England should be indisposed to do so.

Various motives appear to have guided Prince Gortchakow to this course. Independently of the sincere wish of the Emperor and of the Imperial Government to terminate this lamentable war between Turkey and the Christian Slav Provinces—a war which is producing very serious agitation in Russia, and which may lead to very great complications in Europe—there is an evident desire on the part of Prince Gortchakow that England should take the initiative in proposing mediation, and I learn, confidentially from an official source, that his Highness would be disposed to support any proposal of Her Majesty's Government towards effecting a pacification rather than follow in the wake of the Austrian Government.

Prince Gortchakow in this respect is in a position of some delicacy, not to say of embarrassment.

At the commencement of these Eastern difficulties Prince Gortchakow was induced to allow Count Andrassy to take the lead, probably from a wish not to compromise Russia with the Slav population, and in the hope, perhaps, that any discontent which the Austrian action might produce among the Slav races would be beneficial to Russia.

With this view both Austria and Russia, each playing its own game for dominant influence over the Slavs, were opposed to a joint action with the other Powers, and with the concurrence of Germany, as holding the balance between the three Empires, the lead in the negotiations was left in the hands of Count Andrassy.

The Emperor of Russia, however, before these negotiations were undertaken, had expressed his desire that they should be carried on with the concurrence of the six Powers, not wishing that any apparent league of the three Empires should cause jealousy or suspicion to the other three Courts.

By general agreement, however, it was finally agreed that Count Andrassy should undertake to submit to the European Powers certain proposals for a settlement of the difficulties between the Porte and the insurgents. These proposals, although agreed to generally by the Powers and accepted by the Porte, were wholly unsuccessful in restoring peace.

The vacillating policy of Count Andrassy in the subsequent stages of the negotiation with the insurgents, and the total failure of his attempt to bring about a pacification, are now matters of history.

But Count Andrassy still continued to hold the lead in directing the policy of the three Empires, and accepted the invitation to meet Prince Gortchakow at Berlin to concert further as to the course to be taken.

I have reason to believe that, on this occasion, it was owing to the influence of Count Andrassy, and, on his advice, supported by Prince Bismarck, that the Berlin Memorandum was drawn up without any previous concert with the Representatives of the three other Powers at Berlin, and that the agreement to confirm their deliberations to the three Imperial Ministers was come to at Berlin previous to the arrival there of Prince Gortchakow.

It would thus appear that Count Andrassy has consistently opposed any course which implied collective deliberation of the European Powers, and has on various occasions equally resisted any proposals for collective action.

Count Andrassy has also opposed the idea of an European Conference, and is evidently anxious to avoid any course which may fetter his future action, or which may preclude the possibility of his profiting of any eventualities which may arise to further the objects he may have in view.

Since the Imperial meeting at Reichstadt, various circumstances led me to suppose that engagements were taken by the Imperial Ministers which would only be applicable in the event of certain eventualities, and among those engagements I suspect that the eventual annexation of a portion of Bosnia by Austria was acquiesced in by Prince Gortchakow.

It is evident that, if any such ulterior design under certain circumstances were entertained by Count Andrassy, it would neither find support in any collective action of the Powers, nor would it be agreed to by an European Conference.

I am informed here, and from an influential source, that the eventualities foreseen or anticipated at Reichstadt have not yet occurred, and that consequently the engagements of Prince Gortchakow towards Count Andrassy need not be realized. But I am also informed that, in order to relieve himself entirely from these engagements, Prince Gortchakow is very desirous that England should take the initiative in bringing about peace, and that an European Conference should meet for that purpose; the more so, as if the war continues the eventualities provided for at Reichstadt may occur, when Prince Gortchakow will have to fulfil his engagements with Count Andrassy.

The increasing excitement in this country in favour of the Servians is causing serious anxiety to the Government, and it is felt that the present prospect of peace can only be successfully realized by the collective action of the Powers and by an European Conference. There is a general feeling here that the suspension of hostilities, and the knowledge that the Powers of Europe had undertaken to mediate between the Porte and the combatants, will at once calm the intense excitement in this country in favour of the Servians and of the Christian races, while it is presumed that nothing short of European mediation will restore peace and order, and put an end to the thrilling horrors from the seat of war which are daily agitating the public mind.

I may add my conviction that, if pacificatory measures are not speedily adopted, the area of the war will be greatly extended, and very serious European complications may result.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Doc. 46

Mr. Harriss-Gastrell to Sir A. Buchanan.—(Received at the Foreign Office, September 18.)

(No. 166. Confidential.)

Sir,

Buda-Pest, September 13, 1876.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that an Hungarian friend of mine had last week interviews with Servians of note upon their politics, and that M. Risties held to him language of which the following is the substance:—

The war was for internal reasons unavoidable, but is a mistake. Serbia has been disappointed in her reliance upon a general rising in Bosnia and Bulgaria, and the Russian money has gone to the ambulances and not to the army. An aggressive war is now quite impossible, and as to a defensive war Serbia had done enough for her honour, and can only lose more by prolonging the struggle. "She has fought against the forces of Europe, Asia, and Africa, and been worsted." She must pay an indemnity and make the best terms she can, but they must be honourable terms. There is no opposition in the country itself to making peace; except, perhaps, a few Conservatives, and if it were not for some other reasons the war would cease at once. Bosnia could not be obtained, yet the best solution of present difficulties would be for Serbia to govern Bosnia as tributary to the Porte. A peace would last for fifteen or twenty years.

But M. Christies said the duration of a peace would depend upon Turkey. And both my informants and myself obtained the impression from persons who have been some time in Belgrade and Serbia, that on the one hand the Russians were opposing peace, and, on the other hand, a reaction against the Russian immigrants was beginning. In respect of the latter, M. Risties said that a few Russians would be kept as regular officers for the Servian troops, but that the others would return home.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. P. HARRISS-GASTRELL.

Doc. 47 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 18.)

(No. 622.)

My Lord,

Vienna, September 14, 1876.

IT is believed here that the Servian Government are prepared to an indemnity to the Porte for the expenses of the war, being included in the terms of pacification finally agreed upon, and that they will also undertake the immediate construction of the proposed railway.

The Austrian-Hungarian Government wish a stipulation on this subject to be included in the terms of pacification, as the delay which has hitherto taken place in the construction of a railway across the Principality is attributed to the part unwillingness of the Government to make a loan for such an object, their policy having been to reserve all their financial resources for the great struggle which has just ended in disaster.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Doc. 48 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 18.)

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, September 18, 1876.

I DO not understand the distinction that is being made between orders to remain on the defensive, and those for suspension of hostilities.

Turks could not be told that they must not defend themselves if attacked.

In order to put a stop to operations as quickly as possible Porte ordered its commanders to remain on the defensive, in hopes that similar orders would be given by Servia, but without waiting for them.

As soon as such orders are given, hostilities will be suspended, which they could not be by the act only of one of the belligerents.

Doc. 49

*The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.**

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, September 18, 1876, 4.16 P.M.

INFORM the Porte that Her Majesty's Government accept the suspension of hostilities as equivalent to an armistice, in the confidence that it will be further extended in case of necessity.

From the language of the Russian Ambassador to me to-day, I have reason to believe that his Government will take the same view.

Doc. 50

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, September 18, 1876, 4.40 P.M.

I AGREE in Mr. White's suggestion that the Turkish Commander-in-chief should communicate with Servian General, and that both sides should pledge themselves not so resume hostilities without previous notice. Urge the Porte to send orders in this tense.

Doc. 51

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.†—(Received September 18, 6 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Strictly Confidential.)

Vienna, September 18, 1876.

I HAVE been told in strict confidence that Count Andrassy's proposal for a basis of pacification has been sent to Russia, Germany, and England, and that it will not be communicated elsewhere until it is known how far it is considered acceptable by these Powers.

*[Editor's note: Footnote is lacking in the original print.]

† Repeated to Embassies.

Doc. 52

Prince Gortchakow to Count Schouvaloff.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Count Schouvaloff, September 18.)

(Télégraphique.)

Livadia, le $\frac{5}{17}$ Septembre, 1876.

NOUS sommes d'accord avec les bases de paix telles que les formule Lord Derby, et nous agirons simultanément aussitôt que vous nous direz que Lord Derby fait démarche analogue à Constantinople.

Doc. 53

Prince Gortchakow to Count Schouvaloff.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Count Schouvaloff, September 18.)

(Télégraphique.)

Livadia, le $\frac{5}{17}$ Septembre, 1876.

SELON nos nouvelles la Porte ne promet suspendre les hostilités que pour dix jours, ce qui serait inacceptable.

Si, comme vous l'a dit Lord Derby, le terme de la suspension n'est pas défini, nous pouvons l'accepter comme armistice.

Doc. 54

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 19.)

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, September 18, 1876.

MINISTER for Foreign Affairs would not state to-day that an engagement would be taken to prolong suspension of hostilities, but he said that it must necessarily be prolonged if before its expiration the Powers are not agreed upon the conditions of peace.

It was, he said, owing the anxiety of the Porte that peace should be immediately made that the suspension had been made short; so that the basis should be fixed before the Servians were too much strengthened by reinforcements daily arriving from Russia, which it is feared would raise their pretensions or those put forward for them.

Doc. 55

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 19.)

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, September 18, 1876.

MUSURUS PASHA reports a conversation with your Lordship which has made much impression on the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

He states that your Lordship personally recognized much justice in the Turkish conditions, but told him plainly that they would be considered inadmissible, and that if the Porte refused to agree to terms that would be proposed by the Powers, Russia, and probably Austria, would interfere by arms; that Great Britain would certainly not join in a war against Turkey, but that public feeling in England is such that Her Majesty's Government could not go to war with any other Power in her defence, but must withdraw and leave her to her fate.

Doc. 56

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 20.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, September 20, 1876.

THE Roumanian Agent has called to say that 300 Russians, on a special train, crossed Roumania yesterday, and that the Austrian Government hesitate to give advice as to how far such proceedings should be tolerated.

His Government only want encouragement from the Great Powers to stop what may be made hereafter a cause of complaint against it on the part of Turkey.

Doc. 57 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 20.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, September 20, 1876.

I HAVE read to Count Andrassy, and left with him, at his request, a memorandum of your Lordship's telegram of yesterday, requesting to know whether he acquiesces in your proposals for a basis of negotiations for peace, which I also recited in that document.

He stated in reply that he had no objection to the proposals of Her Majesty's Government as they are explained, but he fears that the word "autonomy" may excite hopes in provinces which cannot be realised, and therefore feels anxious that in any proposal made to the Porte some reference should be made to the reforms already agreed upon, in order that the Christians may understand by right of autonomy it is only such reforms, accompanied, perhaps, by some extension and proper guarantees for their execution, that it is intended to obtain for them.

He has sent full explanations of his views on the subject to the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires, which must have reached London last night, and he hopes your Lordship will be able to formulate any proposal you may make to the Porte, so as to enable him to give it his support as being based upon the reforms which the Porte has already assented to.

The above read to his Excellency. He (?) is anxious that what is proposed may be susceptible of immediate application, in order that the refugees may go home before the winter.

Doc. 58 Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 20.)

(Telegraphic.)

Bucharest, September 20, 1876.

SPECIAL train with 300 Russian volunteers passed yesterday, arms scarcely concealed. Disorders at railway stations. Roumanian Government much embarrassed.

M. Bratiano asked my advice; I recommended prudence, and, if possible, to avoid collision.

Doc. 59 Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 20.)

(Telegraphic.)

Belgrade, September 20, 1876.

I HAVE delayed reporting the proclamation by General Tchernaiieff, at head-quarters, of Prince Milan as King, thinking the act too absurd by itself, and have waited to learn what action would be taken in consequence here.

I am assured that Prince Milan and his Ministry have sent to head-quarters Minister of War to say that their sanction to this "pronunciamento" is not given. Emperor of Russia sent to Consul a telegram calling it, "C'est un acte de folie."

I think that in case of an armistice it will be hushed up.

Doc. 60

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 583.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 21, 1876.

HER Majesty's Government have had under their consideration, in communication with the Governments of the other Powers, signatories of the Treaty of Paris, the conditions of peace between the Porte and Servia, and Montenegro, proposed by the Turkish Government for the judgment and equitable appreciation of the mediating Powers.

Those proposals were as follows:—

1. A new investiture of the Prince of Servia, if the Servians wish to keep him as their Ruler.

2. Recognition of right to occupy fortresses; but the Porte will be willing to negotiate with respect to the effect to be given to it.

3. Payment by Servia of the interest on the sum spent by Turkey in the war, which is estimated at about 1,000,000*l.*

4. Railway through Servia ; to be worked by a Turkish Company ; but if this proposal is objected to by the Powers, Porte is prepared to submit.

5. Limitation of Servian regular army, and the entire suppression of the militia.

The Porte has stated, according to your Excellency's telegram of 14th instant, that with regard to Montenegro, it will accept the *status quo* ; and as soon as the Powers have expressed their judgment in the conditions, the Porte will give orders to stop hostilities within twenty-four hours ; and friendly relations will be resumed with the two Principalities.

I have already intimated to your Excellency by telegraph, that Her Majesty's Government held the proposals of the Porte to be inadmissible ; and I have since learned that the other Powers are of the same opinion.

I have now, therefore, to request your Excellency to inform the Porte of this, and to state that the following are the provisions which seem to Her Majesty's Government proper to form the basis of a pacification :—

1. The *status quo*, speaking roughly, both as regards Servia and Montenegro.

2. That the Porte should simultaneously undertake, in a Protocol to be signed at Constantinople with the Representatives of the mediating Powers, to grant to Bosnia and the Herzegovina a system of local or administrative autonomy by which is to be understood a system of local institutions which shall give the population some control over their own local affairs, and guarantees against the exercise of arbitrary authority. There is to be no question of the creation of a tributary State.

Guarantee of a similar kind to be also provided against maladministration in Bulgaria. The exact details of these might be discussed later.

Your Excellency will add that the reforms already agreed to by the Porte in the note addressed to the Representatives of the Powers on the 13th of February last, will be expected to be included in the administrative arrangements for Bosnia and the Herzegovina, and, so far as they may be applicable, for Bulgaria.

Your Excellency is already acquainted by telegraph with the views of the other Powers, and you may state to the Turkish Government that Her Majesty's Government have little doubt that the proposals which you are instructed to make will command a general support.

Your Excellency cannot too strongly impress upon the Porte the urgency of the situation and the advantage which would be gained by a prompt and ready acceptance of the proposed basis of pacification.

You will also state that, as the continuance of hostilities while the conditions of peace are being dealt with between the Powers and the Porte would be obviously inexpedient, an early arrangement should be made for the conclusion of a formal armistice.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 61 Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 21.)

(Telegraphic.)

Belgrade, September 21, 1876.

SERVIAN Government urgently represent that present suspension of hostilities proves itself impractical in consequence of great proximity of outposts to principal armies.

Doc. 62 Mr. Macdonell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 21.)

(Telegraphic.)

Berlin, September 21, 1876, 3 P.M.

M. DE BULOW informs me that Count Andrassy's proposals only reached Berlin yesterday, and are now under consideration. German Government, therefore, decline as yet to adhere formally to conditions proposed by Her Majesty's Government.

His Excellency appears disposed to advocate larger concessions in the direction of autonomy for the Provinces.

Doc. 63

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Macdonell.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, September 21, 1876, 6.30 P.M.

IN reply to your telegram of to-day, inform German Government that the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires has been with me this afternoon, and has given me a copy of a telegram from his Government, dated yesterday, stating that having taken into consideration the formal declarations of Her Majesty's Government as to the meaning attached to the proposal for the grant of local or administrative autonomy to Bosnia and the Herzegovina, "the Austro-Hungarian Government is in a position to pronounce in principle its complete consent to the English proposals which have been communicated to it. The Royal and Imperial Government desires only that it may be formally recorded that the reforms already asked for from the Porte for Bosnia and the Herzegovina, and agreed to by the Turkish Government, shall form the basis of that local autonomy."

I have accordingly inserted in the proposals of peace which I have instructed Her Majesty's Ambassador to make to the Porte, a paragraph that the reforms already agreed to by the Porte shall be included in the administrative arrangements for the Provinces.

Under these circumstances Her Majesty's Government trust that German Government will not hesitate to support the proposals at Constantinople.

Urge this on them, as time is of the utmost consequence.

Doc. 64

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 22.)

(No. 1010. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Therapia, September 14, 1876.

THE disposition of the new Sultan continues to be much discussed, and I cannot say that the general impression has hitherto been favourable.

I cannot discover any definite grounds for this, except that there are reasons for believing that His Majesty is a man of firm will and strong character, which gives rise to an apprehension that he may prove an arbitrary Sovereign.

On the other hand, the persons immediately attached to him, some of whom I know intimately, give an excellent account both of His Majesty's kindliness of disposition and of his enlightened views.

They declare him to be resolute in his determination to put an end to the abuses under which he admits his subjects to be suffering.

He encourages those who approach him to speak freely and without reserve, and he is doing away with much of the pomp and ceremony of the Court.

His conduct towards the members of his own family forms a marked contrast to the treatment to which he and his brothers were subjected.

Not only his brothers, but the sons of the late Sultan Abdul Aziz are allowed a liberty, and are treated with a consideration hitherto unknown in this Court as regards Princes near to the Throne.

There appears, in fact, much that gives good promise, but I greatly doubt whether it will be found easy to induce His Majesty to accept the restrictions on his own authority, which the reforming party in the country thinks necessary.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Doc. 65

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 22.)

(No. 1011. Most Confidential.)

My Lord,

Therapia, September 14, 1876.

THE person sent to me confidentially by the Sultan this morning spoke of the dread His Majesty felt at the thoughts of having to receive General Ignatiev upon his return here.

His Majesty felt such a repulsion at the insincerity of the General's character that if the Ambassador was to give him good and honest advice he should not be able to help receiving it with distrust.

I am not able to state whether this was said with a view to eliciting an opinion whether it would be desirable to obtain the replacement of General Ignatiev by another

Ambassador, but I thought it right to observe that any endeavour to obtain his recall at this moment would be unadvisable.

General Ignatiev is, to a great extent, the representative of the party in Russia whose feelings are in such an excited state, and I did not think it at all likely that the Emperor would do anything so unpopular with them as to recall him.

I said that although General Ignatiev was apparently shortly coming back, I did not believe that he would himself wish to remain here very long, as his position would be anything but agreeable.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Doc. 66 *Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received September 22.)
(No. 1013.)

My Lord,

Therapia, September 14, 1876.

THE Memorandum, of which a copy is inclosed, conveys the answer of the Porte to the proposed mediation of the Guaranteeing Powers.

It goes into matter which it would have been desirable to omit, or to have embodied in some separate document, but I imagine that the Turkish Ministers, knowing that the course they have consented to adopt, will expose them to much hostile criticism, felt obliged to be able to show that they had fairly laid before the mediating Powers a statement of their views upon the origin and causes of the present position of things.

The conditions which the Porte considers itself entitled to expect are more extensive than what I had reported to your Lordship as likely to be made.

The reason for this may be taken to be that at first it was intended that the acquiescence in them of the Powers should be asked before the mediation was accepted or negotiations for peace commenced, and the conditions were made such as it was hoped the Powers might accept, with comparatively few exceptions.

Now it has been resolved to accept the mediation without the preliminary acquiescence of the Powers in the conditions, which, being only submitted to their appreciation, have been made more in accordance with the expectations of the public.

The Ministers will show that they have laid what are looked upon as the just rights of the Porte fully before the Powers, upon whom will fall the odium of their rejection, for they do not blind themselves to the certainty that this will be to a large degree their fate.

The really important point in this document is that, as regards the conditions put forward, the Porte in distinct terms "*déclare l'en remettre entièrement*" to the judgment and equitable appreciation of the Powers.

It is difficult to understand with what object the Memorandum is made to close with the declaration that orders for the suspension of hostilities would be given within twenty-four hours of the receipt of the decision of the Powers upon the six conditions; for at the very same moment that the Memorandum was put into the hands of the different dragomans the Minister for Foreign Affairs informed them, though, as he declared, confidentially, that orders for the suspension of hostilities would be sent to-night or to-morrow morning.

However contradictory this may seem to the last sentence of the Memorandum, it amounts to an official engagement from which the Porte cannot retreat.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Doc. 67

Inclosure in Doc. 66.

Memorandum.

ABUSANT des faveurs tout exceptionnelles que la sollicitude de la Cour Suzeraine et la bienveillance des Grandes Puissances avaient assurées à la Principauté de Serbie, son administration s'était appliquée à provoquer, à fomenter et à appuyer les mouvements insurrectionnelles dont la Bosnie, l'Herzégovine et la Bulgarie ont été le théâtre dans ces derniers temps. Malgré les protestations pacifiques dont l'Administration Princièere se montrait prodigue, des bandes armées, formées en Serbie, envahissaient de tous côtés le territoire Ottoman.

Afin de repousser ces agressions le Gouvernement Ottoman s'est vu dans la nécessité d'établir sur la ligne de démarcation des corps d'armée entiers dont l'entretien a lourdement pesé sur les finances, et malgré les sacrifices que cette situation lui imposait, malgré les provocations incessantes auxquelles il a été en butte, malgré les obstacles insurmontables que cette attitude de la Serbie créait à la pacification des districts insurgés, le Gouvernement Ottoman, dans son désir de se montrer jusqu'au bout fidèle à ses engagements, non seulement évita d'assumer l'initiative des hostilités, mais il s'attacha avec soin à ne fournir à la Serbie aucun prétexte de plainte légitime. Mais le jour vint où désespérant d'épuiser la patience de la Sublime Porte, la Serbie jeta enfin le masque, et, entraînant le Monténégro dans la lutte, déclara ouvertement la guerre, qu'elle n'avait cessé de faire plus ou moins clandestinement depuis plusieurs mois. On vit alors un peuple que l'Empire Ottoman avait comblé d'immunités, de privilèges et de bienfaits de toute nature, poussé par une démagogie sans scrupule, se jeter à corps perdu sur les provinces limitrophes de l'Empire Ottoman pour y porter la destruction et la misère; un prince vassal, subissant l'égarement populaire, forfaire aux lois de l'honneur et de la loyauté; des Ministres qui, repoussant les conseils pressants de l'Europe réunie, n'hésitaient pas à précipiter la Principauté dans l'abîme pour satisfaire des convoitises aussi coupables que chimériques.

Surpris par une si brusque attaque, le Gouvernement Ottoman, qui, loin d'avoir enfermé la Serbie, comme on l'avait dit, dans un cercle de fer, n'avait jusqu'alors entretenu sur la ligne de démarcation que des corps d'observation, et qui puisait sa sécurité dans l'accord des Grandes Puissances et leurs efforts unanimes à Belgrade en faveur de la paix, eut besoin de quelque temps pour mettre en ligne de forces militaires qui devaient châtier la rébellion et faire ressentir aux auteurs de cette provocation les conséquences de leur éclatante ingratitude.

Le sort des armes s'est prononcé en faveur du droit, et les combats sanglants qui se sont succédé sur les rives du Timok et de la Morava depuis quelques semaines, ne laissent aucun doute sur l'issue finale du conflit engagé.

Le Gouvernement Impérial apprécie à leur juste valeur les motifs d'humanité qui ont fait que, dans un moment si critique, la diplomatie Européenne a voulu interposer ses bons offices sur la demande que lui a faite le Gouvernement de Belgrade. Les Gouvernements amis qui ont fait connaître à la Sublime Porte leurs vœux pour une prompt cessation de l'effusion du sang étaient sûrs de rencontrer auprès d'elle le même désir. Aussi, en vue de voir ce désir réalisé un moment plus tôt, le Gouvernement Impérial remplit-il un devoir en déclarant qu'il est convaincu qu'aussi longtemps que les bases mêmes de la reprise des relations amicales n'auront pas été arrêtées, une suspension d'hostilités qui, dans la pratique, rencontreraient infailliblement de sérieuses difficultés et maintiendrait l'incertitude dans les esprits, ne ferait après tout qu'aggraver sans profit aucun la situation des parties et rendrait d'autant plus difficile à atteindre le but que la médiation bienveillante des Puissances amies s'est proposé. Le Gouvernement Impérial a pensé, dès lors, qu'il était préférable sous tous les rapports de décliner tout d'abord une mesure préliminaire qui constituerait par elle-même une difficulté de plus et de formuler sans perte de temps les conditions auxquelles la paix elle-même pourrait être rétablie, eu égard à la situation nouvelle créée par la Serbie.

En lui accordant la faculté de s'administrer elle-même, en lui abandonnant, en dernier lieu, la garde du pays et le soin d'en assurer la défense, le Gouvernement Impérial avait voulu satisfaire tous ses vœux et s'était fié à la fidélité et à la sagesse de ses populations et des chefs qui la gouvernaient. Il avait cru resserrer ainsi par le sentiment du bienfait et non pas relâcher les liens qui attachaient ce pays à l'Empire Ottoman, dont il fait partie intégrante. Cette confiance a été trompée, et les Grandes Puissances amies seront évidemment portées à reconnaître la nécessité de conjurer le retour des maux dont on vient de faire la plus douloureuse épreuve; la faute grave dont la Serbie s'est rendue coupable vis-à-vis du pouvoir Suzerain, aussi bien que vis-à-vis de l'Europe entière méritait une répression sévère.

Mais, le Gouvernement Impérial saura élever cette fois-ci encore sa modération au-dessus de ses ressentiments quelque légitimes qu'ils soient. Il ne voudra pas que le peuple Serbe succombe sous le poids de la lourde responsabilité qu'il s'est attirée. Ce qu'il demande, c'est que les relations futures de la Serbie avec le pouvoir Suzerain ne recèlent plus les mêmes dangers que par le passé et que l'expérience qu'on vient de faire ne soit pas perdue.

Pénétrée de cette nécessité, la Sublime Porte a recherché et étudié avec soin les conditions auxquelles la paix pouvait être accordée à la Serbie, et, après un mûr examen, elle s'est arrêtée aux dispositions suivantes :—

1. La personne investie de la dignité de Prince de Serbie devra venir dans la capitale pour rendre hommage à Sa Majesté.

2. Les quatre forteresses dont la garde seulement avait été confiée par le Firman de 1283 au Prince de Serbie, et dont la possession *ab antiquo* était demeurée au Gouvernement Impérial, seront réoccupées par l'armée Impériale comme par le passé; et sur ce point on se conformera strictement aux dispositions du Protocole du 8 Septembre, 1862.

3. Les milices seront abolies. Le nombre des forces nécessaires pour maintenir l'ordre dans l'intérieur de la Principauté ne dépassera pas 10,000 hommes avec deux batteries d'artillerie.

4. Ainsi qu'il est stipulé dans le Firman de 1249, la Serbie sera tenue de renvoyer dans leurs foyers les habitants des provinces limitrophes qui y émigreraient, et, excepté les forteresses qui existent en Serbie *ab antiquo*, toutes fortifications postérieurement établies devront être complètement démolies.

5. Si la Serbie ne se trouve pas à même d'acquitter l'indemnité dont le montant sera déterminé, le tribut actuel de la Principauté sera augmenté de l'intérêt de la somme représentative de l'indemnité.

6. Le Gouvernement Ottoman aura le droit de faire construire et exploiter par ses agents ou par une Compagnie Ottomane, à son choix, la ligne qui devra relier Belgrade au chemin de fer aboutissant à Nisch.

L'examen attentif des conditions qui viennent d'être énumérées démontrera que le Gouvernement Impérial s'est exclusivement inspiré du désir légitime de faire une œuvre durable que la passion ou l'aveuglement ne puisse pas détruire ou compromettre au lendemain de son établissement.

Il n'y en a aucune qui ne soit impérieusement commandée par les principes de la prudence ou de la justice la plus élémentaire, aucune qui ne corresponde à un besoin vivement senti, aucune enfin qui modifie la situation que les Traités ont créée à la Principauté.

Les restrictions ne portent que sur les concessions que la Sublime Porte avait directement et spontanément accordées à la Principauté; elles laissent intacte l'œuvre commune de la Sublime Porte et des Puissances, et, dès lors, elles ne portent aucune atteinte aux grands intérêts qui y avaient été contemplés et sauvegardés.

La clause concernant la limitation de la force armée et de l'artillerie Serbe, en même temps qu'elle mettra l'administration en état de maintenir l'ordre intérieur, épargnera au pays des sacrifices onéreux. La Serbie n'ayant à redouter aucun ennemi, l'augmentation de son effectif militaire et de son artillerie ne saurait avoir qu'un but hostile au Gouvernement Impérial.

Quant à la clause relative à la réoccupation des forteresses et que la Sublime Porte recommande tout spécialement à la sollicitude des Puissances, elle ne constitue en elle-même que la revendication d'un droit incontestable; et la possession des susdites forteresses par les troupes Ottomanes est considérée par l'opinion publique si non comme la seule du moins comme la plus importante et la plus précieuse de toutes les garanties qui pourraient être fournies à la cause de la paix.

Ces considérations se présentent d'elles-mêmes; et le Gouvernement Impérial a conscience de n'avoir pas outrepassé le but qu'il s'était proposé.

Cependant, désireux d'échapper à tout soupçon d'arrière-pensée et de donner en même temps une preuve manifeste de sa confiance dans l'œuvre médiatrice des Puissances qui ont unanimement déploré l'agression de la Serbie et qui sont pénétrées de la nécessité de la paix, le Gouvernement Impérial, après avoir ainsi exposé ce qui, à ses yeux, ne serait que la conséquence juste et nécessaire de la situation respective dans laquelle les deux parties se sont placées au point de vue du droit, déclare s'en remettre entièrement pour les six conditions énumérées plus haut au jugement éclairé et à l'appréciation équitable des Six Puissances médiatrices; il leur confie entièrement le soin de peser les raisons qui ont dicté ces six conditions comme moyen de prévenir le retour de^s calamités actuelles; et il s'en rapporte à leurs sentiments de haute équité et de haute sagesse.

En ce qui concerne le Monténégro, on s'en tiendra au *statu quo ante*.

Aussitôt que les Puissances médiatrices auront fait connaître à la Sublime Porte leur jugement sur les conditions précitées, elle donnera dans les vingt-quatre heures l'ordre d'arrêter les hostilités; les relations amicales seront reprises et les deux Principautés profitant ainsi de la modération du Pouvoir Suzerain que toute l'Europe aura constaté, se trouveront replacées dans leur état normal.

Sublime Porte, le 14 Septembre, 1876.

Doc. 68

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, September 22.)

M. l'Ambassadeur,

Sublime Porte, le 14 Septembre, 1876.

JE vous transmets, ci-joint, le texte en langue Turque, et la traduction en langue Française, du Hatt Impérial qui a été lu solennellement Dimanche dernier à la Sublime Porte.

Je signale à toute votre attention ce Rescrit Impérial, qui exprime la volonté de notre auguste Souverain.

Sa Majesté place en première ligne parmi les devoirs du Gouvernement Impérial, l'exécution rigoureuse des lois et la bonne administration de la justice, le contrôle des finances, la propagation de l'instruction publique, le développement de l'agriculture et de l'industrie, et enfin les réformes administratives qui sont le point de départ et la base de tout progrès et de toute civilisation.

Notre auguste Maître recommande à ses Ministres l'adoption de toutes les mesures indiquées par les exigences de notre temps, et prescrit à cet effet l'institution d'un Conseil-Général inspirant toute confiance à la nation, et dont les principales attributions consisteront à préparer et à élaborer les Lois de l'Empire, et à veiller au budget des recettes et dépenses du pays.

La volonté de Sa Majesté établit la responsabilité des Ministres et des fonctionnaires de l'Etat, qui, avec la stabilité qui leur sera désormais assurée, constituera la meilleure garantie d'une bonne administration.

En déplorant les maux de la guerre civile actuelle, Sa Majesté engage le Ministère à rechercher les moyens propres à faire cesser ce fléau et à ramener la paix dans ses Etats. Enfin, elle recommande d'une manière toute particulière le respect des Traités internationaux et le maintien des bons rapports existant entre l'Empire Ottoman et les Puissances amies.

En vous pénétrant des principes de haute sagesse et des sentiments paternels dont le Hatt Impérial est l'éclatante expression, vous voudrez bien, M. l'Ambassadeur, donner à cet acte souverain toute la publicité possible dans le pays où vous êtes accrédité.

Veuillez, &c.

(Signé) SAFVET.

Doc. 69

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, September 22.)

(Télégraphique.)

(Confidentielle.)

Constantinople, le 20 Septembre, 1876.

LE langage que Lord Derby vous a tenu dans ses derniers entretiens avec vous sur nos affaires a produit sur la Sublime Porte une pénible impression. Vous savez combien l'appui de l'Angleterre nous est nécessaire pour pouvoir parer le coup qu'on prépare contre l'Empire. Il est de notre devoir de faire tout notre possible pour le conserver. Tout le monde connaît l'origine des événements de la Bulgarie; nous nous sommes trouvés dans le cas de légitime défense, et la nouvelle enquête qui sera effectuée sur les lieux finira par rétablir la vérité et par démontrer à l'Europe combien les nouvelles qui se sont répandues à ce sujet sont entachées de partialité. En attendant, je conjure, je supplie le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique de ne pas nous condamner sans nous entendre. D'ailleurs, le bon sens du peuple Anglais, la solidarité des grands intérêts qui unissent les deux pays, et la présence à la tête du Cabinet de St. James des deux hommes d'Etat éminents qui nous ont donné tant de témoignages de leur esprit éclairé et de leur amitié, et qui ne se laisseront jamais influencer par des insinuations malveillants, nous rassurent que les préventions de l'Angleterre feront place à des appréciations équitables et bienveillantes.

Doc. 70

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, September 22.)

(Télégraphique.)

Constantinople, le 21 Septembre, 1876.

DANS certains cercles politiques en Europe on a fait répandre le bruit qu'il y aurait eu tout récemment de la part de l'armée Impériale une infraction à la suspension d'hostilités.

Vous êtes autorisé à démentir formellement cette nouvelle, qui ne repose sur aucun fondement.

Doc. 71 *Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received September 23.)

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, September 23, 1876.

SIR ARNOLD KEMBALL telegraphs this morning from head-quarters as follows:—

“Examination of intelligent Servian prisoner, in which I assisted, exposed device of Russian officers last night to provoke conflict.”

Doc. 72 *Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received September 24.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, September 24, 1876, 4 P.M.

THE French Ambassador received to-day the despatch from the Duc Decazes, alluded to in Lord Lyons' telegram of the 19th, stating that French Government intended to urge on the Porte the necessity of taking measures to prevent atrocities being committed by disbanded irregular troops, and expressing hope that the other Powers will do so likewise. The Austrian Government have, however, already, I am told, called the attention of the Porte to this subject, and more especially to excesses committed in Albania by troops leaving the army on the frontier of Montenegro.

Doc. 73 *Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received September 24.)

Telegraphic.)

Vienna, September 24, 1876.

FOLLOWING telegram received from Monson:—

“Signor Durando informs me that the Russian interest in Montenegro is at present almost powerless; that the Prince is very cold to the Russian Agent, and very glad of the support of Austria, Italy, and France. His Highness is personally anxious for peace, and to enter into friendly relations with England. Italian Consul assures me that Montenegro is, however, quite capable of continuing the war, and of keeping the Turks at bay.”

Doc. 74 *Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.**—(Received September 24.)

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, September 24, 1876, 6 P.M.

I HAVE sent following to Consul at Belgrade:—

“Porte has not yet consented to formal armistice, but will prolong formal suspension of hostilities to October 2, and orders the military commanders not to resume offensive without distinct orders.”

* Repeated to Embassies.

Doc. 75 *Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received September 24.)

(Telegraphic)

Therapia, September 24, 1876, 7.20 P.M.

I HAVE sent following to Belgrade :—

"Sir A. Kemball telegraphs that the Servians have fired shells daily on the 'Turkish watering parties and foraging parties within the line of the Turkish outposts, as it was on the day the armistice was named."

Sir A. Kemball adds: "Turks say armistice prolonged till 2nd October; if so, Russian officers ought to be required to cease firing shells within Turkish line of outposts."

Doc. 76

Major-General Walker to Mr. Macdonell.—(Received at the Foreign Office, September 25.)

(No. 65. Confidential.)

Sir,

Berlin, September 21, 1876.

IF after-dinner conversations have any worth, I certainly had a very remarkable after-dinner conversation yesterday with General von Todleben.

One remarkable feature of the present course of manœuvres has been the gradual but extreme change which took place after the date of our departure from Leipzig (7th to 10th September), in the demeanour of the Russian officers present towards the English.

On first arrival at Berlin, for the parade of the 1st, nothing could have been colder, most markedly so, than the demeanour of these gentlemen. I am not only the oldest Military Attaché in Berlin, but am the only officer here in that capacity bearing the rank of Major-General, with the exception of the Russian General Officer who forms part of the military household of the Emperor. Neither at Berlin nor at Leipzig was one of the Russian officers present, all of inferior rank to myself and new-comers, introduced to me; nor did one of them leave cards—a ceremony in which they are generally profuse. During the stay at Messeburg the aspect of affairs completely altered, and, since we have been in Berlin, nothing can have exceeded the warmth and cordiality shown towards the English party by all the Russians present. It has amounted to something nearly approaching an affectionate demonstration.

Yesterday was the last dinner of the foreign officers. I and the majority of my colleagues joined the party, for the purpose of seeing the last of our friends. Lord Napier was not present, being at Potsdam, on a visit to their Imperial Highnesses the Crown Prince and Princess. General von Todleben had the place of honour; and, to my great surprise, in proposing the first toast, instead of drinking to the health of the Emperor, our host, rose and proposed a toast to the health of "that most distinguished General, Lord Napier of Magdala." Various toasts of no great importance followed; cigars were lighted, and the party began to break up, when General von Todleben turned to me, with a glass of champagne in his hand, and challenging the Russian Lieutenant-General von Gerschan to join us, said—"We must drink a glass together, to the good understanding of England and Russia."

I naturally accepted the challenge, and drank to the good understanding of England and Russia. General von Todleben then grasped my hand, which he held, and said—"Now let us talk over the aspect of affairs. Why should there be any differences between Russia and England? Let us look at the question openly and fairly like men; what is there for us to quarrel about? We want nothing but union with England; and we two combined could dictate terms to the world, and have all that we desire. We don't want Constantinople; what does England want?"

Speaking my own opinions and convictions I could have said a good deal more than I thought myself entitled to reply, and I, therefore, beyond civil acknowledgment of his frankness, only allowed myself to remark that there was one point of which we could never lose sight, and that was the security of the road to India.

General von Todleben at once said—"Why don't you take what will ensure your wishes: Crete, for instance?" And, on my saying "But England cannot take," he added, "Well, if you don't like to take Crete, take a harbour. You'll have, then, Gibraltar, Malta, and another, and pretty much your own way in the Mediterranean; at any rate we ought to be in agreement. We have a large army, you have a small one; you have the finest fleet in the world; we have one that will never be able to vie with it. Combined we have everything that is required—we, the army; you, the fleet; and could dictate terms to the world. Why not come to an understanding?"

The party then broke up, and our conversation turned to the General's visits to England, to the friends he had made there, and to his wish, if circumstances permitted, to settle in England for the remainder of his days. At the risk of exposing myself to the reproach of magnifying the value of any conversation held with a person of so small importance as a Military Attaché, I have, after due consideration, thought it well to put this occurrence on record. In doing so it is my duty to be thoroughly honest, and to make no comment on this and on other circumstances attending our intercourse with the Russian officers, for the plain reason that I am not a fair judge.

I thoroughly distrust every word said to me by a Russian; I have never yet met one whose assurances in political matters I would accept on oath. I have not observed, for eleven years, the unvarying efforts of the Russians in Berlin to live on terms of the warmest sociability with the English—while they intrigue against and run us down behind our backs—without learning the amount of caution necessary in all transactions with this semi-Oriental people.

The key to all which concerns the relations between England and Russia is, in my opinion, fear of Germany, which is now the friend, but may to-morrow become the bitterest enemy and rival of Russian progress.

I have, &c.

(Signed) BEAUCHAMP WALKER, *Military Attaché.*

Doc. 77

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Malet.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, September 26, 1876, 2 P.M.

WE hope that Italian Government will instruct their Agent to communicate to the Prince of Montenegro the consent of the Porte to prolong the suspension of hostilities, and urge His Highness to give similar orders, if there should be any necessity for so doing.

Doc. 78

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 26.)

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, September 26, 1876, 2 P.M.

SIR ARNOLD KEMBALL telegraphs from head-quarters this morning as follows:—

"Night affair as usual near Trestle Bridge; commenced by Servians before 2 A.M., and maintained on both sides with fire of infantry and frequent shells till past 3 A.M."

Doc. 79

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 594. Very Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 26, 1876.

THE Russian Ambassador called upon me this afternoon and communicated to me in strict confidence a despatch from Prince Gortchakow, stating that the Russian Government wished to propose to those of England and of Austria that in the event of the Porte refusing the conditions of peace which had now been offered them, the following measures should be taken:—

1. The occupation of Bosnia by an Austrian force.
2. The occupation of Bulgaria by a Russian force.
3. The entrance of the united fleets of all nations into the Bosphorus.

Prince Gortchakow says that he believes the threat of taking these measures would be sufficient to accomplish these objects. It would force the Porte to accept the terms proposed to it; it would avert war (the Prince does not state what war), and it would ensure the better treatment ("assurer le sort") of the Eastern Christians.

In a second despatch the Russian Chancellor states that when Count Schouvaloff makes this confidential communication to me he is authorized to add that if, in my opinion, the entry of the united fleets into the Bosphorus would be preferable alone, and sufficient for the object in view, the Russian Government are ready to consent to this course, and will abstain from making the two other propositions mentioned above.

I said, in reply, that his Excellency could not of course expect an immediate answer to such a proposal. It was too grave a matter for me to pronounce an opinion on it offhand,

and without consulting my colleagues. But several questions naturally arose as to the necessity or expediency of such a step as Prince Gortchakow suggested. I did not myself anticipate an absolute rejection of the terms of peace by the Porte. There might be negotiations and attempts to induce the Powers to change their view on some points, rather of detail than of principle, but such information as I had received did not lead me to anticipate a positive or categorical refusal.

I thought, moreover, that, in the actual state of men's minds, there was considerable danger in employing threats of material force. They could not fail to produce irritation at Constantinople, and might have the effect of inducing the Sultan and his advisers, who are now disposed to act with great prudence, to change their course and rush into war. Were such threats to become publicly known in Turkey, they would have the worst effect on the Mahommedan population, and might not improbably lead to outbreaks by which the Christian population would suffer.

The Russian Government should also consider the unfortunate impression that would be produced on the public mind throughout Europe. All the world were, at this moment, prepared for a peaceable solution. Menaces of the kind proposed by Prince Gortchakow would produce a general feeling of alarm and uneasiness, from which all interests would suffer.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 80 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 26.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Most Confidential.)

Therapia, September 26, 1876, 5.24 P.M.

THE Russian Ambassador has communicated to me to-day confidential proposals from his Government to us and to Austria that if the Porte refuses offered conditions of peace, the following steps should be taken:—

1. Occupation of Bosnia by Austrian force.
2. Occupation of Bulgaria by Russian force.
3. Entrance of united fleets of all nations into the Bosphorus.

Prince Gortchakow believes threat of these measures would be sufficient to force the Porte to accept terms, and would thus avert war and ensure better treatment of Eastern Christians.

He states in a second despatch that if I think entry of united fleets into Bosphorus sufficient, Russia would consent to abstain from two other propositions.

I have replied that I can give no answer without consulting colleagues; that I do not anticipate absolute refusal of our terms by the Porte, though there may be bargaining upon points of detail. I have urged danger that threats may cause a change in the present prudent disposition of Sultan and his Ministers, and lead to outbreaks against Christians. I have also mentioned bad impression which would be produced in Europe generally.

Doc. 81 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 26.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, September 26, 1876.

THE Russian Ambassador communicated yesterday to the Minister for Foreign Affairs a telegram from his Government stating that the explanations of the English Government being received, orders were sent to the Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople to act in concert with the other Representatives.

A telegram from Belgrade reports that the Servians object to the extension of the suspension of hostilities.

Doc. 82 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 26.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, September 26, 1876, 11.50 P.M.

THE word "autonomy" offers the chief difficulty to acceptance by the Porte of the conditions proposed by Her Majesty's Government. Porte would, I think, certainly

* Repeated to Embassies.

agree to system of control which your Lordship states the expression to be intended to convey.

Would it be sufficient if the Porte signified its acceptance of that system without mention of local autonomy, which is viewed with dislike by everybody, and especially by the Greeks?

Doc. 83

M. Ristitch to Consul-General White.

M. l'Agent,

Belgrade, le 14 Septembre, 1876.

J'AVAIS eu l'honneur de vous aviser par ma note du 25 Août dernier, que j'espérais prochainement être en mesure d'exposer le récit des actes de destruction et de cruauté commis par l'armée Turque à Kniajevatz pendant le court séjour qu'elle y a fait.

Je m'empresse de vous transmettre aujourd'hui en traduction le rapport que M. le Colonel Horvatovitch a adressé à ce sujet au Général Tcherniaieff le jour de la réoccupation de Kniajevatz par ses troupes et compte sur votre obligeance pour vouloir bien le communiquer à votre haut Gouvernement.

Je saisis, &c.
(Signé) J. RISTITCH.

Doc. 84

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 595 A.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 27, 1876.

HER Majesty's Government have carefully considered the questions raised by the Porte as regards the terms proposed for a basis of peace; they fear, however, that as those terms have received the adhesion of all the Powers there would now be great difficulty in obtaining their modification.

Those of the conditions proposed by Turkey which might be more or less admissible—such as a reduction of the Servian army, the payment by Servia of a war indemnity, the construction of a railway in that Principality, and the destruction of the Servian fortresses—present difficulties of execution, and the risk of delay and objections during their consideration is so great that in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government it would not be worth the while of the Porte to insist on their insertion in the conditions of peace.

Her Majesty's Government would not be prepared to abandon the form of a Protocol for the promise of reforms in the disturbed provinces, nor do they consider that the substitution of an identic note would satisfy public opinion in this country and abroad. On this point it would be well that your Excellency should remind the Porte that the Constitution of the Lebanon was embodied in the Protocol of the 9th of June, 1861.

The expression "autonomy" has been generally adopted by the Powers, and it would be hopeless to attempt to procure its abandonment. The qualifying explanations which have been introduced ought, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, to suffice for the satisfaction of the Sultan's advisers.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 85 *Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 27.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, September 27, 1876, 5 P.M.

THE Emperor, who had gone to shoot in Styria with a party, including the King of Saxony, returned last night, leaving his guests in the mountains to receive a Russian General, who arrived yesterday with a letter for His Imperial Majesty from the Emperor Alexander. The General was received by the Emperor this morning, and had afterwards a very long interview with Count Andrassy. I have learnt, from a confidential source, that he will return to Livadia immediately on receiving Emperor's answer, and that object of his mission is to come to an understanding with Austria-Hungary to terminate, in concert with other Powers, and the least possible delay, the present dangerous state of things in the East, by insisting on their views being accepted by the Porte. I have been also told, in the strictest confidence, that he speaks of the dangerously excited state of the Russian people, but of the Emperor having no especial sympathy with

Servia, but as being merely desirous of advancing interest of Christians in Turkey, and that on being asked whether any concentration of troops had taken place on the frontier he said none, but that twenty days would be sufficient to prepare war.

Doc. 86 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 27.)

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, September 27, 1876, 6 P.M.

PROPOSALS of the Porte reported in my other telegram contained, I believe, the utmost that it will be possible to obtain, and they appear to give more ample control over the Administration than was suggested by Her Majesty's Government. Exceptional measures for insurgent provinces alone would be certainly fatal to tranquillity elsewhere, and it is indispensable that they should be general if insurrections are to be avoided. The great difficulty that I apprehend is connected with the proposed Protocol, which would nearly give Powers Treaty-rights of interference in the internal administration.

Austrian and Russian occupations cannot be carried out without almost certain prospect of rising against Christians, which the Government would be powerless to restrain, and the mere threat of such a measure would cause an irritation among Mussulmans of which the consequences cannot be foreseen.

Doc. 87 Mr. Malet to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 27.)

(Telegraphic.)

Rome, September 27, 1876.

ON the 25th instant the Italian Government communicated through their Agent to Prince of Montenegro consent of the Porte to prolongation of suspension of hostilities, and His Highness replied that he would follow the course adopted by Servia.

Information has reached Italian Government this morning that Servia will only consent to regular armistice.

Doc. 88 Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 27.)

(Telegraphic.)

Belgrade, September 27, 1876.

PRINCE MILAN professes a desire for regular armistice, but from all I see here I am of opinion that the prompt offer of a complete restoration of peace and the *status quo ante* might yet be accepted here, or at any rate might find an echo amongst many Servians; an armistice and appended negotiations present numerous dangers of complications, and Russian assistance tends to protract contest during the winter, while advice given from the same influential source excludes every other.

*Doc. 89
(No. 477.)*

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

My Lord,

Foreign Office, September 27, 1876.

DURING a conversation which I had with the Russian Ambassador to-day, I thought it right to draw his serious attention to the inconvenience and danger attendant upon the extraordinary influx of Russian volunteers into Servia. I said that I had been unwilling hitherto to address remonstrances to his Government upon the subject, knowing the difficulties in which they were placed by the state of public opinion in Russia. The matter had, however, reached a stage which could not but occasion considerable apprehension. From some of the later telegrams we had heard of the arrival of as many as 300 Russian volunteers in a single day, and it seemed as if the larger proportion of the officers in the Servian army were now Russian. The first object of these volunteers was not likely to be an exclusive regard for the welfare of Servia; they had come down for the purpose of fighting the Turks; and whether the country suffered or not, was to them a matter of little concern, as compared with the continuation of the war. Each addition, therefore, tended to increase the strength of the war party in Servia; and if matters continued as they were now going on, it seemed not improbable that the Powers might have more difficulty in obtaining the acceptance of reasonable terms at Belgrade than at Constantinople.

Count Schouvaloff, in reply, made no attempt to deny the proportions which the movement had assumed. He promised to submit at once to his Government the objections that I had urged. But he stated that the difficulty of checking the emigration was very great, and that it would be difficult, in his belief, for the Emperor to take any decided step in that direction without an immense loss of popularity and influence. The state of public feeling in Russia, his Excellency said, was something to which the excitement felt here bore no comparison.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 90 *Mr. Monson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 28.)*

(No. 162. Political. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Ragusa, September 20, 1876.

IN consideration of the potent influence exercised upon public opinion in England by the foreign correspondence of the daily press, I hope your Lordship will think me justified in adverting to another letter from the "Times" correspondent in Montenegro, which appears in the number of that journal published on the 12th instant, and which is headed "Russia and the Herzegovina."

The object of this letter is to refute two points made by Sir Charles Dilke in a recent speech to his constituents: Russian complicity in the insurrection; and the bigotry and intolerance of the Orthodox (Greek) Christians. I am chiefly concerned with the first of these two points; as the letter of the "Times" correspondent is in direct contradiction with all my reports to your Lordship upon the character of Russian action in these regions.

While at variance with Mr. Stillman as to the non-connivance of Russia, I entirely accept the statement made in the early part of his letter as to the encouragement given by Austrian officials to the insurrection; and I am very glad that such a statement has been made public, corroborating as it does the reports which I have for six months been obliged to make to your Lordship of the manner in which the local authorities in Dalmatia have understood the performance of their duty.

But I cannot equally accept Mr. Stillman's disclaimer of the complicity of Russian officials. I have no doubt, as I have frequently stated before to your Lordship, that the official correspondence between M. Yonine and his superiors has been conducted in the most discreet language, and might be published to-morrow without injuring Russia's claim to be credited with complete abstention.

But putting aside the telegraphic and private communications, of which I can have no knowledge, it is enough to advert to the notorious facts that the Russian Consul-General kept open house for all those of his compatriots who frequented the insurgent camps, and who fought in the rebel ranks; that the Consulate has been the Treasury into which the Russian subscriptions have been poured; that the money so received, nominally for the relief of the refugees, has been largely expended, according to admissions made to me by M. de Wessilitzky and the Secretary of the Consulate, in the purchase of provisions and munitions of war for the insurgents; that M. Yonine himself was not backward, during the abortive efforts at pacification, in using language of ridicule respecting all Count Andrassy's measures; that he openly testified his delight at every Turkish defeat, and his sorrow at any insurgent reverse. All these facts are, I should say, amply sufficient to show the insincerity of Russian neutrality, and to indicate the extent of the encouragement necessarily given by the conduct and attitude of Russia's official Representative, without appealing to the testimony borne by Major Gonne, after his visit to Cettigné, of the light in which M. Yonine was there regarded, nor to the remarkable admission recently made to me by M. Yonine himself, and reported to your Lordship in my despatch No. 132 of the 23rd August, that, although not responsible for the original outbreak, he had taken care that the movement should not come to nought for want of proper direction.

The facts which I have mentioned are as well known to the "Times" Correspondent as to myself. He should indeed be far better informed with respect to them than I am, seeing that for months he has lived on terms of the closest intimacy with M. Yonine; had dined daily at his table; has been, according to his own statements, the confidant of many of M. Yonine's secrets, and, as he almost explicitly avows in the letter upon which I am commenting, was the medium of communication upon a very important

occasion between M. Yonine and the insurgent chiefs. I do not, however, recollect to have seen in any of his letters to the "Times" one word of comment upon the number of Russians who found the winter climate of Montenegro and the Herzegovina so remarkably suitable to their health; nor any account of the share taken in the military operations near Trebigné last autumn by Colonel Bobrikow, of the staff, Russian Military Agent at the Consulate, and by Colonel Kuzminski, a retired (?) Russian officer, who now holds a command in Servia under General Tcherniaieff.

I took occasion last night to draw the Russian Acting Consul-General into conversation upon the manner in which the large funds received by the Consulate from Russia had been employed. His language was simply the repetition of what I have frequently heard before. I gather from him (but of course I am always careful to refrain from all direct interrogation) that about 100,000*l.* have been received by the Consulate; and that a comparatively small amount has been expended on the relief of the refugees. "I can only suspect," said M. Schatokhine, "the manner in which the money has been employed. We have had a horde of disreputable people hanging about the Consulate. A good deal of the money probably stuck to their fingers; and I can assure you that not one correspondent has been here, but has been paid by us. Of the employment of many of the sums which I have disbursed by M. Yonine's orders, I never have had any information; but those sums did not go in charity. As for the insurrection itself, during the whole of the winter it was perfectly fictitious, was sustained by artificial means, and might have been suppressed by the simple withdrawal of those means."

Speaking of M. Yonine's character and conduct, he said (and I am quite disposed to agree with him) that M. Yonine is an honest fanatic, who has persuaded himself of the righteousness of his policy, and conscientiously thinks himself justified in every step which he may decide upon taking to ensure its success.

Your Lordship's time is too valuable to be employed in reading all that might be written upon this subject; and I have tried to condense what I had to say into the briefest space. I can only regret that the system of terrorism exercised here over every journalist who has attempted to write fairly, should have been so rigorously and successfully practised as to have given the command of the situation to correspondents who have been paid or persuaded to conceal the truth. I make no pretence of having access to special secret sources of information. An intelligent and honest correspondent, who had enjoyed all the facilities which have been at the disposal of the correspondent of the "Times" could long ago have placed before the English public the true character of the insurrection in the Herzegovina.

I reserve for a subsequent despatch the few observations which I have to make upon the antipathy between the Catholics and the Orthodox Churches, and the intolerance attributed to the latter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

Doc. 91 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 29.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, September 29, 1876, at noon.

I HAVE sent following to Belgrade: Sir A. Kemball telegraphed yesterday evening as follows:—

"Servian attack renewed again and again, supported by heavy artillery until after dark without any success.

"Turks protest with great justice against bad faith of the Servian Commanders.

"We think probable that attack may be renewed to-morrow."

Doc. 92 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 29.)*

(Telegraphic.)

(Confidential.)

Vienna, September 29, 1876.

I HAVE reason to believe that the Russian proposal is that, unless the Porte accepts the armistice and the basis for peace as proposed by Her Majesty's Government,

* Repeated to Embassies.

purely and simply, a Russian force shall enter Bulgaria through Roumania, and that an Austrian force shall simultaneously occupy Bosnia, the other Powers being invited to send ships of war to Constantinople.

The answers will not be given till Sunday.

Russia considers the proposal submitted to the Porte an ultimatum, and Count Andrassy has apparently agreed that it should be so. He is, however, I am told, seriously embarrassed between the danger of allowing Russia to act alone and the consequences to Austria of acting with her.

Russia is, I am told, confident that she will have nothing to fear from England.

Doc. 93 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 29.)*

(Telegraphic.)

(Very Confidential.)

Vienna, September 29, 1876, 3.20 P.M.

AFTER obtaining information, reported in another telegram of this date, I called on Baron Orczy, and communicated to him the decisions believed to have been adopted by Council at Constantinople. He had already received them from Count Zichy, and said they would not satisfy Count Andrassy. I then asked whether, in that case, the Government had accepted the proposals of Russia for the joint occupation of Turkish territory, and I spoke so decidedly of them that he did not attempt to deny their existence, but only excused himself from discussing them as Count Andrassy had not given an answer to them. From his observations, however, I have little doubt as to their being accepted. I may also mention, in strict confidence, that Baron Rothschild having consulted Count Andrassy to-day as to whether it would be expedient to bring out an Austrian Loan, his Excellency said the situation had become so critical that such a measure would be most inopportune. Under these circumstances I have earnestly advised the Turkish Ambassador to impress upon his Government that a serious danger can only be escaped by immediate pure and simple acceptance of your Lordship's proposals. I have ascertained that Austrian military chest amounts to 2,000,000*l.*, which would meet immediate expenses of an occupation.

Doc. 94 Mr. Monson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 30.)

(No. 165. Political.)

My Lord,

Ragusa, September 22, 1876.

I HAVE the honour to transmit, herewith, to your Lordship two copies of a short essay upon "The Inhabitants of the Mountain Districts forming the Frontier of Montenegro and the Herzegovina." This essay is by M. de Sainte-Marie, French Vice-Consul at Ragusa, who was for some years employed in the French Consulates at Serajevo and Mostar.

The author, who is a good Slav scholar, gives the religious statistics of the eight clans composing the border population; showing that out of a total of 24,938 souls, 15,075 profess the Orthodox (Greek) faith, and the remaining 9,863 that of Mahomet. The latter, therefore, amount to a little more than a third of the total population.

It is from the tribes living in these districts, as has been repeatedly pointed out by Mr. Consul Holmes and myself, that the nucleus of the insurgent force has been formed. It is mentioned in the accompanying tract that these mountaineers have always enjoyed a practical independence; the fact being, as I stated in my despatch No. 56 of the 14th of June, that their taxation has been merely nominal, and that the officials of their local tribunals are not Mussulmans but Orthodox Christians.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

Essay entitled " Herzégovine et Bosnie, Frontières du Monténégro ;" par E. de Sainte-Marie, charge par le Gouvernement Français d'une Mission Archéologique en Tunisie.

I. LES populations Herzégoviniennes et Bosniaques, établies le long de la frontière nord du Monténégro, sont celles qui méritent le plus d'attention en raison de ce voisinage même, elles s'étendent depuis la Baie de Sutorina à l'ouest, jusqu'à la langue de terre resserrée entre la Serbie et la dite Principauté, c'est-à-dire à l'est, jusque sous Siénitza, du 16° au 17° 30' de latitude, par 42° 30', 43° de longitude. Elles se divisent en huit clans ou tribus principales.

Ce sont, en commençant par la gauche, les Zubchi, Baniani, Nicholsich, Piva, Drobnjak, Charansi, Kolachin et Wassoïevitch.

1. Le territoire de Zubchi, le plus petit de tous, mesure environ quatre heures du nord au sud, et deux heures de l'ouest à l'est, dans sa largeur moyenne ; il forme le territoire de Sutorina qui s'avance jusqu'à la mer, près de Castelnuovo, au sud ; il est borné à l'ouest par la Dalmatie et à l'est par le Monténégro et la Dalmatie ; au nord, il est séparé du district de Trébigné, dont il relève administrativement, par une ligne fictive qui prend Klobrino, à la frontière Monténégrine, et va parallèlement à la Rivière Trébincitza, toucher au district de Raguse.

Aucun cours d'eau important n'arrose ce territoire montagneux et pierreux, la route du port de Sutorina à Trébigné coupe ce district en deux, du nord au sud, en passant par les villages de Blokrino, Biélitzi, Grab, Tuli et Tchitchévo.

L'endroit le plus important de cette région est le port de Sutorina, dont le Traité de Passarovitch interdit l'usage à la Turquie. Au point de vue stratégique, Sutorina a une grande valeur, puisque les navires de guerre peuvent y aborder, sans détours, et y jeter, en cas de besoin, des hommes et des munitions facilement transportables par la voie de Trébigné et Bilek. Les points intermédiaires entre la mer et ces deux chefs-lieux, par exemple Klobrino, Grab, Tuli, etc., par lesquelles se font les communications avec le littoral, ont une importance telle que le Gouvernement Ottoman devrait les fortifier, pour s'assurer, en cas de guerre, un passage certain entre les montagnes du pays de Zubchi. En effet, une troupe décidée pourrait aisément défendre ces défilés et porter, au moins pour un temps, un sérieux empêchement aux manœuvres d'une armée quelconque. Dans la dernière guerre du Monténégro, on a vu Luca-Vukalovitch opérant dans ces parages contre les troupes Turques, pour leur en fermer l'entrée, et les Monténégrins cherchant sans cesse à investir ce territoire pour couper une des bases d'opération des Osmanlis.

Il n'y a que trois portes pour faire pénétrer des forces en Herzégovine : Klek, Yénibazar, et le port de Sutorina. Or, cette dernière ville étant la plus voisine des confins, et sur le rivage de l'Adriatique, elle est de beaucoup préférable aux deux autres. Klek est remplacé par les gendarmes Musulmans que la population n'accepterait pas. Sans nier la Suzeraineté du Sultan, ces clans protégés par les montagnes et par le voisinage des frontières, se sont affranchis à peu près du joug de Constantinople : lorsque deux représentants viennent au chef-lieu ils jurent aux fonctionnaires Turcs, fidélité, attachement, &c., et ensuite, rentrés chez eux, ils rejettent loin d'eux ces serments de circonstance.

L'influence du Monténégro sur ces pays est réelle, mais occulte ; les Orthodoxes se rapprochent naturellement de la Principauté et n'étaient les Musulmans qui forment parmi eux un tiers de la population, ces Chrétiens auraient autrement paralysé l'autorité de la Sublime Porte sur le pays. Mais aussi, pour tout dire, si ces Chrétiens sont zélés partisans du Monténégro, ils n'aiment pas moins leur quasi indépendance ; voilà pourquoi, depuis des siècles, ces clans forment entre la Turquie et le Monténégro une zone politique intermédiaire.

Je termine ici cette étude consacrée principalement à la géographie des contrées bien peu connues, et j'y joins, pour l'intelligence de ce travail, un croquis de carte où l'on trouvera groupés tous les renseignements que j'ai été obligé de disséminer afin de mieux m'expliquer.

(Signé)

E. DE SAINTE-MARIE.

Doc. 96

Mr. Malet to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 30.)

(No. 340. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Rome, September 25, 1876.

SIGNOR MELEGARI had no news of importance to communicate to me this afternoon upon the state of affairs in the East. I communicated to him your Lordship's telegram *en clair* of yesterday, reporting Sir Arnold Kemball's testimony regarding the attitude of the Turkish forces during the suspension of hostilities.

His Excellency is hopeful respecting the negotiations at Constantinople and does not apprehend that divergencies will arise which will create grave embarrassment. On the other hand, I had a conversation with the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires, who appears to be anxious at the turn which affairs have taken in Servia. He says that, notwithstanding the disavowal of the Servian Ministry, the proclamation of the Prince as King is a serious affair; that interested persons at Belgrade are using it as a lever of excitement, and that the fall of the Ministry is a not improbable result. He says, however, that the Russian Ambassador, whom I have not seen for a few days, treats it as an act of folly which can and will receive no countenance from Russia.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWARD B. MALET.

Doc. 97

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, September 30.)

(Télégraphique.)

Constantinople, le 28 Septembre, 1876.

JE vous ai signalé successivement les violations partielles de la suspension d'armes, commises par les Serbes. D'après un télégramme que nous recevons aujourd'hui même du Généralissime Abdul Kérim Pacha, la lutte vient de recommencer sur toute la ligne; et, cette fois-ci, la suspension des hostilités est ouvertement violée par les Serbes. Ce matin l'armée Impériale s'est vue attaquée de tous côtés devant Aléxinatz par un feu d'artillerie violent. Nos troupes ont dû y riposter. Mais les Serbes ne cessent d'établir des renforts sur le théâtre de la lutte, et la bataille continue encore avec un terrible acharnement.

Cet acte démontre clairement la résolution préméditée et bien arrêtée des Serbes de reprendre sérieusement les hostilités. Il est dès lors évident que l'armée Impériale ne peut plus se tenir sur la défensive sans manquer à ses devoirs les plus impérieux.

Veuillez vous énoncer dans ce sens auprès du Ministre des Affaires Etrangères.

Doc. 98

*MM. Zankof and Balabanon to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 30.)**London, 28 Warwick Street, Regent Street,**le 30 Septembre, 1876.*

Excellence,

PAR la lettre de recommandation ci-incluse, votre Excellence verra quelles sont les qualités des Soussignés, et quel est le but de leur voyage en Angleterre.

Nous voudrions, Excellence, pouvoir obtenir de votre Excellence la permission de vous dérober quelques uns de vos précieux moments afin de vous entretenir nous-mêmes des affaires de notre malheureux pays.

En attendant, et dans ce cas où votre Excellence ne saurait nous accorder ce moment aujourd'hui même, nous avons l'honneur de prier votre Excellence de vouloir bien remettre à Sa Majesté la Reine d'Angleterre le mémoire ci-inclu dont nous sommes porteurs pour elle de la part de la nation Bulgare, ainsi que la supplique dont nous l'avons accompagné.

Nous avons, &c.

Les Délégués Bulgares,

(Signé)

D. ZANKOF.

MARCO D. BALABANON.

Doc. 99

Inclosure in Doc. 98.

Petition addressed to Her Majesty.

Madame,

Londres, ce 30 Septembre 1876.

DELEGUES de la nation Bulgare dont les malheurs inouïs ont eu un long retentissement dans le monde entier, nous avons l'honneur de présenter à votre Majesté un mémoire. Elle verra quelle est depuis cinq siècles la vraie situation de cette nation et quels sont les vœux qu'elle soumet aux Puissances Chrétiennes de l'Europe pour ses futures destinées.

Madame,—Au milieu de ses cruelles souffrances, le malheureux peuple Bulgare a pu pousser un soupir de soulagement à la nouvelle qu'une grande et magnanime nation comme l'est la nation Anglaise en Europe, indignée des atrocités Turques qui décimaient ce peuple et réduisaient en cendres les villages qu'il habite et les champs qu'il cultive, prenait part à ses malheurs, protestait énergiquement contre ces abominations et s'empressait de lui venir en aide. Ce soupir de soulagement, Madame, n'a pas tardé à se changer en un ferme espoir pour l'amélioration du sort de notre nation, et c'est cet espoir qui a fait naître dans son sein la pensée d'adresser un mémoire aux Souverains Chrétiens de l'Europe.

Madame,—Des milliers d'êtres humains, des milliers de veuves et d'orphelins que la charité Anglaise a pu conserver à la vie, bénissent déjà et béniront à tout jamais le nom d'Angleterre. Ils bénissent aussi le nom de votre Majesté appelée par la Divine Providence à être la Reine bien-aimée d'une aussi grande nation. Mais le peuple Bulgare, Madame, ne pourra désormais exister si ses vœux, exprimés dans le mémoire ci-inclus, ne sont pas pris en considération par les Souverains de l'Europe, protecteurs des peuples Chrétiens d'Orient. Ce serait le remettre entre les mains de ses bourreaux que de le laisser dans l'état d'esclavage où il se trouve. Votre Majesté, dont les sentiments de justice et d'humanité servent d'exemple à toute une nation, ne le voudra certainement pas; tout au contraire, non seulement elle agira de manière à faire partager ses sentiments d'équité à son Gouvernement éclairé, mais elle voudra bien le charger d'appuyer par toute son influence les vœux exprimés dans le mémoire que nous avons l'honneur de soumettre à votre Majesté.

Madame,—Grande Reine d'une grande nation, soyez la protectrice généreuse d'un peuple gémissant depuis cinq siècles dans une domination avilissante. Ce sera pour votre Majesté un glorieux titre de plus qui ajoutera à l'éclat de votre règne à jamais mémorable.

Nous avons, &c.

Les Délégués Bulgares,

(Signé)

D. ZANKOF.

MARCO D. BALABANON.

Doc. 100 *Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 2.)*

(No. 446.)

My Lord,

St. Petersburg, September 26, 1876.

THE proclamation by the Servian army of Prince Milan Obrenovich as King of Servia has taken the Imperial Government by surprise, and is strongly condemned not only in the official circles, but generally by the Russian press.

I have the honour to inclose to your Lordship a series of articles reproduced by the "Agence Russe" disapproving the act of the Servian army.

I am informed that the Emperor Alexander wrote on the margin of the telegram conveying the intelligence the following words: "C'est une farce qu'on nous joue."

I have, &c.

(Signed)

AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Doc. 101

Inclosure in Doc. 100.

Extract from "Agence Russe."

LA nouvelle, aujourd'hui démentie, de la proclamation du Prince Milan comme Roi de Serbie, inspire aux journaux Russes les réflexions suivantes:

Le "Golos" le condamne dans les termes suivants:—

"La démonstration politico-militaire du 16 Septembre à Aléxinatz produira, si elle vient à se confirmer, une pénible impression. Il faut avoir traversé de cruelles épreuves

et croire sa position désespérée pour se résoudre à recourir à de pareils moyens. On a peine à admettre que le peuple Serbe consacre dans cette circonstance l'acte de l'armée, que la Skouptchina y donne sa sanction, enfin que le Prince Milan lui-même l'accepte. S'est-on bien rendu compte à Aléxinatz de la gravité de cette démonstration ; en a-t-on mesuré toutes les conséquences possibles ? Nous n'avions pas entendu dire jusqu'à présent que la dictature militaire gouvernât en Serbie et que l'armée fût autorisée à se mêler des questions politiques. Même en reconnaissant les immenses services rendus par les troupes Serbes dans la guerre actuelle, il faut néanmoins reconnaître qu'elles n'ont pas encore atteint le but poursuivi qui est la délivrance de la patrie, nous ne pensons pas qu'il suffise d'une démonstration politique pour l'accomplir. . . . Les amis sincères de la Serbe, en recherchant les motifs du 'prononciamiento' d'Aléxinatz, ne voudront y voir que l'intention de protester contre les prétentions insolentes de la Turquie et d'affirmer le droit du peuple Serbe à nommer son Prince. Même dans ce sens la démonstration militaire Serbe aurait encore pour effet de compliquer une situation déjà assez tendue, car elle équivaut à la proclamation de l'indépendance complète de la Serbie en dehors de l'action des Puissances, éventualité qui ne paraît pas entrer dans les vues des Cabinets, dont l'entente a pour objet le règlement des affaires en Orient. Il y a peu de jours, la Serbie avait spontanément déclaré vouloir conserver le *status quo ante bellum*. Ne serait-ce pas l'obstination du Gouvernement Ottoman à réclamer l'amoindrissement de l'autonomie Serbe qui a poussé à la mesure extrême en question ? Que la Porte médite donc les complications que peut engendrer son manque de conciliation. Elles sont de nature à entraver la tâche de pacification entreprise par les Puissances et doivent nécessairement aggraver sa responsabilité ; c'est par conséquent contre elle que le ressentiment de l'Europe s'exercerait inévitablement en cas d'insuccès. Il n'y a plus pour elle de temps à perdre en vaines résistances aux demandes de l'Europe, lesquelles peuvent facilement se transformer en injonctions suivies de faits matériels ; car si la Turquie persistait dans son aveuglement, elle ne saurait éviter longtemps encore l'occupation des provinces Chrétiennes par les Puissances auxquelles l'Europe aurait confié l'exécution de ses volontés. Cette éventualité n'est pas admise seulement en Russie ; un télégramme de Berlin informe que les conditions extravagantes de la Porte y ont été considérées comme un défi jeté à l'Europe, défi qui délie celle-ci de tous les égards dont la diplomatie a usé jusqu'ici envers elle. En résumé, nous estimons que la démonstration militaire d'Aléxinatz aura été tout au moins inopportune, puisque d'aucune façon elle ne pouvait exercer de l'influence sur les dispositions des Puissances en faveur de la Serbie ; elle aura simplement fait surgir une équivoque ; aussi, sommes-nous convaincus que des plus amples informations ne tarderont pas à la consigner parmi les faits non-avenus."

La "Gazette (Russe) de St. Pétersbourg" se prononce ainsi :—

"Telle est la réponse de la Serbie aux prétentions exorbitantes de la Porte. Si l'on en croit les rumeurs, la proclamation d'Aléxinatz se serait produite à la suite d'un revirement très-favorable dans la situation des armées Serbes. Les troupes Turques sont, comme on sait, entourées et ne tarderont pas à être réduites à capituler. Il ne saurait plus être question de paix. La Porte ayant rejeté le *status quo ante bellum* pour la Serbie, celle-ci ne s'en contente plus et prétend s'affranchir de tout lieu de vassalité. La guerre Serbo-Turque entre, paraît-il, dans une phase nouvelle. Quel sera l'accueil de l'Europe à la manifestation Serbe ? Espérons qu'il ne sera pas de nature à troubler l'accord des Puissances à Constantinople."

La "Gazette de la Bourse" dit de son côté :—

"Il faut considérer cette proclamation comme une réponse aux demandes présomptueuses et inadmissibles de la Turquie. Cet acte de l'armée Serbe, du peuple Serbe pourrions-nous dire, quisque c'est la nation toute entière en armes qui l'a affirmé, est d'une grande portée s'il s'appuie sur un avantage décisif dans la position des troupes vis-à-vis de l'ennemi, et qu'il ait été inspiré du dehors. Autrement, on devrait craindre que le titre de Roi de Serbie ne sert à troubler l'entente des Puissances, si indispensable pour assurer l'amélioration du sort des malheureux Chrétiens d'Orient."

Le "Nouveau Temps" se place à un tout autre point de vue :—

"Evidemment, dil-il, cet acte d'indépendance et de dignité va soulever une tempête parmi les diplomates et dans les rangs de la presse Turcophile. L'Europe Chrétienne ne s'est pas assez indiquée de voir la Porte prétendre qu'un prince Chrétien, qui s'est dévoué

à la défense de la civilisation contre la barbarie, de la Chrétienté outragée contre les hordes Musulmanes, se rendit à Constantinople pieds nus pour solliciter sa grâce. Elle trouvera peut-être étonnante et déplacée cette démonstration de vigueur de la part d'un petit peuple d'un million et demi d'habitants contre un Empire de trente millions. Il lui suffira cependant de voir dans quel état les armées Serbes, animées de l'idée sainte de l'indépendance, ont réduit ces hordes Musulmanes, simplement avides de carnage. Il n'était pas permis d'insulter à l'honneur du peuple Serbe par des propositions aussi humiliantes; après que ce petit peuple avait accompli d'aussi grands prodiges d'héroïsme, la Porte a osé prétendre resserrer plus étroitement encore les chaînes odieuses qui l'enlaçaient. Il a voulu les trancher d'un coup pour se placer à la tête des revendications des peuples opprimés des Balkans."

En résumant, ces articles nous n'avons voulu que donner une idée de l'impression produite sur l'opinion Russe par la proclamation militaire Serbe annoncée par le télégraphe. On a vu que la plupart des organes, ceux-là surtout qui ne se laissent pas entraîner au delà de justes limites par les surexcitations nationales, l'ont judicieusement condamnée, comme il l'a été d'ailleurs par le Gouvernement Serbe lui-même, ce qui, comme le dit très bien le "Goloss," la range désormais parmi les faits non-avenus.

Doc. 102 Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 2.)
(No. 451.)

My Lord,

St. Petersburg, September 27, 1876.

I HAD the honour to receive this afternoon at 5 P.M. your Lordship's telegram *en clair* of this date, stating that Sir A. Kemball had reported that the Servians had recommenced hostilities.

I received at the same time your Lordship's telegram in cypher from Mr. Consul-General White stating that Prince Milan had refused to send orders to the Servian Commanders for the prolongation of the suspension of hostilities.

I accordingly wrote immediately a private note to M. de Giers, of which I annex a copy, inclosing the telegram from Sir A. Kemball, informing him of the refusal of Prince Milan, and requesting him to telegraph the facts as reported to Prince Gortchakow, and to beg His Highness to telegraph urgently to Prince Milan to engage him to send orders to the Servian Commander to remain on the defensive.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

P.S.—Since addressing this despatch to your Lordship I have received a note in reply to mine from M. de Giers, a copy of which I beg to inclose.

A. L.

Doc. 103

Inclosure in Doc. 102.

Lord A. Loftus to M. de Giers.

Mon cher Sénateur,

St. Pétersbourg, le 1^{er} 1/2 Septembre, 1876.

JE m'empresse de mettre sous les yeux de votre Excellence le ci-joint télégramme qui rapporte le renouvellement des hostilités par les Serbes.

Je viens d'apprendre également que le Prince Milan a refusé d'envoyer les ordres au Commandant Serbe de rester sur le défensif.

Je vous prie d'informer le Chancelier de ces faits, et de demander à Son Altesse de télégraphier au Prince Milan, l'invitant instamment à envoyer les ordres au Commandant-en-chef Serbe de maintenir le défensif, et de ne pas recommencer les hostilités.

Agréé, &c.

(Signé) A. LOFTUS.

M. de Giers to Lord A. Loftus.

St. Pétersbourg, le $\frac{1}{2}$ ⁵ Septembre, 1876.

JE ne manquerai pas de communiquer par le télégraphe au Chancelier le contenu du télégramme que votre Excellence me transmet sur le renouvellement des hostilités par les Serbes et que j'ai l'honneur de lui restituer ci-près.

Jusqu'à présent aucune information à ce sujet nous est parvenue ici, par contre nous avons les plaintes des Serbes sur la non-observation de la suspension d'armes par les Turcs, et sur le mouvement de leurs troupes vers la Innura (?) Klissoura (?). Espérons que bientôt ces petits détails n'auront plus aucun intérêt.

Agréez, &c.
(Signé) GIERS.

Doc. 105 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 2.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, October 1, 1876, 9 P.M.

MONSON telegraphs:—

"Prince Nicolas is absent but is expected to-night.

"I shall have an audience of Princess this afternoon.

"Prince's Secretary tells me that his Highness considers himself bound not to separate his action from that of Servia; but that he is decidedly in favour of peace, and that the Principality in general is not opposed to it, on the understanding that they obtain territorial concessions.

"Great reliance is placed on the influence of Great Britain, which it is hoped will be exerted in this sense. Russian Agent urges continuation of war.

"I have been requested to ask whether Her Majesty's Government ever received Montenegrin Memorandum dated about May, and to beg an answer by telegraph."

Doc. 106 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 2.)

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, October 2, 1876.

GRAND Council was postponed, but will take place to-day, when the answer of the Porte will be decided on.

Some of the Ministers whom I saw last night said that the objection to the word "autonomy" is insuperable, as they cannot believe that, if it were intended to convey nothing more than is explained by your Lordship's definition, it would be so much insisted on by Russia.

They appear ready to agree to what is stated in the explanation, but not to commit themselves to an engagement of the extent of which they do not feel certain.

I have urged that, if they are decided to answer in this sense, they should, at any rate, attenuate the [grave?] results to be expected from it, consenting to formal armistice to give time for negotiations.

Doc. 107

The Viceroy of India to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received October 2.)

(Telegraphic.)

Simla, October 2, 1876.

IMPORTANT meetings have been held by Mahommedans at Bombay and Peshawar expressive of sympathy with Turkey.

Bombay Mahommedans have drawn up a petition to the Queen thanking English Government for previous feeling, and requesting Her Majesty not to desert cause of Sultan.

Similar meetings about to be held in Calcutta.

Doc. 108

Prince Gortchakow to Count Schouvaloff.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Count Schouvaloff, October 3.)

(Télégraphique.)

Livadia, le ^{29 Septembre}_{2 Octobre}, 1876.

RECEVONS de notre Chargé d'Affaires à Constantinople informations qui portent qu'en dépit des nouvelles démarches faites auprès de la Porte par les Représentants des six Puissances, les Turcs persistent dans le refus d'autonomie et de Protocole; malgré que l'Ambassadeur d'Angleterre ait communiqué propositions de la Russie concernant coërcition matérielle. La Porte semblerait presque désireuse de pousser les choses à bout pour devoir céder à la pression des Puissances réunies ou pour provoquer un scission entre elles lorsque le moment d'une action décisive serait venu.

En attendant entre Musulmans et Chrétiens la situation reste très tendue.

Doc. 109

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 3.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, October 2, 1876, 7 P.M.

GENERAL Council has confirmed the reforms which are intended to apply to all the Provinces alike. The terms "Protocol" and "administrative autonomy" have been entirely rejected.

The Council has decided that the reforms in question shall be officially communicated by note to the Embassies.

Doc. 110 *Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received October 3.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Belgrade, October 2, 1876, 10 P.M.

PRÉPARATIONS for a winter campaign made here under the impression that the hesitation of the Porte and the probability that the Emperor Alexander may come forward with new demands on Turkey render Russian war not unlikely.

Russia is supposed, with a view to this, to be aiming to secure the neutralization of Austria, and Greece is believed disposed to initiate some action.

Doc. 111

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 3.)

(Telegraphic.)

Paris, October 2, 1876, 11:30 P.M.

DUC DECAZES has received from the French Ambassador at Vienna a telegram dated 5 o'clock this evening, stating that Austrian answer to the letter of the Emperor of Russia had been sent; that he believes it contains an assent to proposal to occupying Turkish territory. The Austrian Ambassador at Constantinople reports the armistice and conditions of peace will probably be refused, as the Porte hopes for disunion among the Powers, and still believes that, in the last extremity, it will be defended by England.

Doc. 112

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, October 3, 1876, 5:16 P.M.

WITH reference to your telegram of yesterday, Her Majesty's Government have learned with much regret that the Porte is likely to refuse the terms of peace which they have proposed. Warn the Porte that the alternative scheme of general reforms and a note is certain to be regarded as inadmissible, and that future terms of peace will undoubtedly be much more onerous, and will be pressed on the Porte very probably by force.

Doc. 113

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 488. Confidential.).

My Lord,

Foreign Office, October 4, 1876.

IN the course of a long and confidential conversation which I had with the Russian Ambassador yesterday, reference was made to the proposals of his Government for measures

of coercion in case the Porte definitively rejected the terms of peace which have been submitted to it.

I told Count Schouvaloff that I could give no positive opinion upon these measures until they had been discussed by my colleagues in the Cabinet Council which was to be held to-day. I did not, however, conceal from his Excellency that the proposals were of a nature to raise grave objections, and that some of them, at least, were likely to be viewed with disfavour in this country.

Several possible alternatives were then mentioned, and among others one to the following effect: that in case of an unfavourable reply from the Porte to the proposals now before it, the Powers should fall back upon their original demand for an armistice, which would afford time for them to consider what further steps should be taken.

Count Schouvaloff said that he would telegraph this suggestion at once to Livadia, and this morning his Excellency called upon me and read to me confidentially a telegram from Prince Gortchakow, which he had just received, though he was not certain that it was in answer to his message. It was to the following effect:—

A regular suspension of hostilities of sufficient length not having been established, and the negotiations for peace having encountered unexpected difficulties at Constantinople, the contest had been renewed in the valley of the Morava.

The Imperial Government could not be indifferent to the bloodshed thus caused, and the Emperor proposed to the Guaranteeing Powers that it shall be arrested by immediately imposing an armistice or truce of six weeks on both parties, so as to give the mediating Governments time to consider the means of definitively arranging the pending questions.

I had no difficulty in submitting this proposal to my colleagues, and Her Majesty's Government have decided to give their support to the proposal of an armistice of not less than a month as the next step to be taken in the event of the rejection by Turkey of the proposed terms for a basis of peace.

They have, on the other hand, been unable to concur in the measures of occupation and the entry of the united fleets into the Bosphorus which had been previously suggested by Prince Gortchakow.

I have informed Count Schouvaloff of this decision.

I am, &c
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 114

Prince Bismarck to Baron von Brincken.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Baron von Brincken, October 4.)

(Telegraphic.)

Berlin, October 3, 1876.

THE Turkish Ambassador has officially communicated to-day the refusal of the peace proposals by the Porte.

Turkey is willing to concede by means of general reforms more than the Powers have asked for. To make concessions to single Provinces will bring the other Provinces to revolution.

The proposed Protocol cannot be signed.

Doc. 115

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.

(Telegraphic.)

(Very Confidential.)

Foreign Office, October 4, 1876, 7.15 P.M.

I HAVE told German Chargé d'Affaires that Her Majesty's Government are prepared to assent to urging upon the Porte an armistice of not less than a month.

Doc. 116 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 4, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, October 4, 1876, 5.10 P.M.

BARON ORCZY informs me that your Lordship will have learnt yesterday from the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires that the Russian proposal for the occupation of the Turkish territory has been declined, and that Count Andrassy is of opinion that if it is necessary to enforce proposals of the Powers, a combined fleet should be sent to Constantinople for the purpose.

With respect to that measure I said to him it appeared to me that the Sultan could not expose himself to the risk of his subjects resenting his allowing a fleet to pass Dardanelles without resistance, and as the people of the capital believe the Straits cannot be forced, a hostile demonstration would probably be ineffectual, and the Powers would be obliged to carry out their menace, which might involve the loss of several vessels.

I suggested that the Austrian Ambassador at Constantinople is in a position, after Austria had declined to countenance occupation of Turkish territory, to claim in return the Porte's assent to an armistice which might prevent an European war; but he said that as the Turkish Ambassador already thinks Austria will be no party to coercive measures, the Porte might be confirmed in the opinion by Count Zichy taking credit for his Government opposing the occupation of the north Provinces.

Baron Orczy, however, told me confidentially that the Servians are so discouraged that they have again applied to Austria to promote peace; and he says that if the Turks could be brought to believe it, their assent to an armistice might make an arrangement of the other questions at issue easy. But I could not induce him to say what Count Andrassy thinks of Turkish concessions or of their being communicated by a note; but the Turkish Ambassador has informed me in strict confidence that when he acquainted his Excellency with the objections of the Porte to the signing a Protocol and the wording of your Lordship's proposals, he answered that the Porte should in that case submit counter proposals to the consideration of the Powers.

Doc. 117 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 5.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, October 4, 1876, 9.45 P.M.

WITH reference to Sir A. Buchanan's telegram, nothing can be more distinct than the terms in which I warned the Porte that no assistance was to be expected from Her Majesty's Government against an attack by Russia; and I have not seen nor had any communication with Halil Pasha for more than a month.

Public feeling here is, however, daily becoming more dangerous; and if the Turks, believing themselves abandoned by every one, give way to despair, it is impossible to say what the consequences may be.

Doc. 118 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 5, 11.45 A.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, October 4, 1876, midnight.

MONSON telegraphs:—"Prince Nicholas seems to meditate no hostilities unless attacked. Austria is pressing His Highness to sever his action from that of Servia, and to conclude separate peace if necessary. French Consul does the same. Shall I follow suit? Prince told me this morning that if England would help him to get the port of Spitzza, and consequently facilities for the free importation of foreign goods, Montenegro would be eternally grateful. He scouted the idea of its becoming a Russian port.

I am decidedly of opinion that generous treatment of Montenegro is Turkey's best policy with a view to the future tranquillity of the Herzegovina.

Doc. 119 The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.†

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, October 5, 1876, 2.24 P.M.

IN the event of the terms of peace proposed by the Powers being formally refused, you will press the Porte, as an alternative, to grant an armistice for not less than a month, stating that, in case of refusal, you have instructions to leave Constantinople, as it will then be evident that further exertions on the part of Her Majesty's Government to save the Porte from ruin have become useless.

You will, however, not take this step without reference home.

You are at liberty to state that, on the conclusion of an armistice, it is intended that a Conference shall immediately follow.

* Repeated to Embassies.

† Repeated to Embassies for confidential information, but not for communication.

Doc. 120

*The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.**

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, October 5, 1876, 3.15 P.M.

COUNT SCHOUVALOFF has communicated to me a telegram from the Emperor of Russia to the following effect :—

The Emperor proposes to the Guaranteeing Powers that further bloodshed should be immediately arrested by imposing an armistice or truce of six weeks on both parties so as to give the mediating Governments time to consider the means of definitively arranging the pending questions.

I informed Count Schouvaloff, after the meeting of the Cabinet yesterday, that Her Majesty's Government have decided to give their support to the proposal of an armistice of not less than a month, as the next step to be taken in the event of the rejection by Turkey of the proposed terms for basis of peace.

I have also told him that Her Majesty's Government have been unable to concur in the measures of occupation, and the entry of the united fleets into the Bosphorus, which had been previously suggested by Prince Gortchakow.

Doc. 121

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.†

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, October 5, 1876.

WITH reference to my telegram of to-day to Lord A. Loftus, state to the Government to which you are accredited that Her Majesty's Government consider that the armistice should be followed immediately by a Conference, and have instructed Sir H. Elliot to intimate this to the Porte.

Doc. 122

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.‡

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, October 5, 1876, 2.10 P.M.

YOU may inform the Government to which you are accredited of the answer given to the Russian Government as reported in my telegram to Lord A. Loftus to-day.

Doc. 123

The Earl of Derby to Consul-General White.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, October 5, 1876, 3.15 P.M.

I HAVE sent the following to Lord A. Loftus :—

[See No. 100.]§

I have instructed Sir H. Elliot to press the Porte in the strongest manner to accede to an armistice, and you will join your colleagues, who will no doubt be similarly instructed in doing the same at Belgrade.

Doc. 124

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, October 5, 1876, 5.8 P.M.

WHENEVER you make the communication to the Porte directed by my telegram of this day, you will deliver an English copy and a French translation of the telegram down to the word "useless."

It is desired that your manner and language should be very earnest, for the consequences of a refusal by Turkey of these last overtures are incalculable.

You may show this telegram also.

* Repeated to Embassies.

† Also sent to Sir A. Buchanan, Lord Lyons, and Mr. Malet.

‡ Repeated to Berlin, Rome, and Paris.

§ [Editor's note: This is Doc. 120 in this volume.]

Doc. 125

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 494.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, October 5, 1876.

I HAD some conversation with the Russian Ambassador this afternoon as to the fresh steps that are now being taken to procure an armistice between Turkey and Servia.

Understanding from what had fallen from his Excellency in previous conversations that the Russian Government would still view with favour the plan of a Conference to consider the means of arranging a permanent settlement, I told him that Her Majesty's Government would propose, in the event of the armistice being concluded, that a Conference should immediately follow ; and that Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople was authorised to make this known to the Porte.

Count Schouvaloff appeared to think that this course would meet with the approval of his Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 126

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, October 6.)

(Télégraphique.)

Constantinople, le 4 Octobre, 1876.

IL nous revient de plusieurs côtés que des pourparlers ont lieu entre les Puissances pour combiner une occupation militaire de certaines parties de l'Empire. Les Autrichiens occuperaient la Bosnie et l'Herzégovine, la Russie la Bulgarie, et les flottes de l'Angleterre et de la France réunies viendraient mouiller dans le Bosphore. Nous nous refusons à croire que l'Europe puisse se prêter à une telle mesure ; mais il nous paraît difficile de nier le fait des négociations. Ainsi la Turquie, qui a usé d'une modération, j'ose dire sans exemple dans l'histoire, à l'égard de son vassal révolté, et a fait taire son juste ressentiment, et jusqu'aux suggestions de sa propre sécurité pour s'incliner devant les conseils de l'Europe, verrait, en retour de tant de désintéressement et d'esprit de conciliation, son territoire envahi par les armes des Puissances amies et alliées, et cela juste au moment où, sous les regards de l'Europe, elle se prépare à doter le pays d'institutions destinées à étendre à tout l'Empire les bienfaits que les Puissances avaient en vue pour quelques unes seulement de ses provinces ; et c'est parceque la Turquie n'a pas accepté, et n'acceptera jamais, une pareille distinction qu'on veut lui infliger cette démonstration. Quel intérêt trouve-t-elle, l'Europe, à préparer cette catastrophe pour notre pays à cause de la non-acceptation d'un simple mot, dont nous voulons réaliser la signification, telle qu'elle nous a été suggérée ? Avant de se lancer dans cette voie, au bout de laquelle elle ne peut voir que de terribles complications pour elle-même, ne ferait-elle pas mieux d'attendre pour voir de quelle manière nous réaliserons nos promesses ?

Si le projet qu'on attribue aux Gouvernements venait à se réaliser, la Turquie n'aurait à opposer aux forces des Puissances que l'évidence de son droit et les actes signés par elles.

Si la Sublime Porte a pu oublier qu'elle a été victorieuse dans la provocation, elle ne oubliera pas qu'elle est encore un Etat indépendant, et qu'elle se doit à elle-même de préférer la mort honorable au démembrement et au partage de ses Etats.

Veillez-vous énoncer dans le sens de cette dépêche auprès du Ministre des Affaires Etrangères.

Doc. 127

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Malet.

(No. 481.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 6, 1876.

THE Italian Ambassador called upon me this afternoon by appointment, and asked me for an explanation of the events which have taken place in the last few days in relation to Eastern affairs. He was acquainted with the Russian proposition of a joint naval demonstration at Constantinople, coupled with a Russian occupation of Bulgaria and an Austrian occupation of Bosnia, but he did not know how this proposition had been received by Her Majesty's Government.

I told him that I had been unable to give Count Schouvaloff a definitive reply on the subject until after the Cabinet which was held on Wednesday last ; but that I had from the first pointed out to him the grave inconveniences and dangers involved in the Russian proposal. The passage of the fleets through the Dardanelles was in any case a violation

of Treaties, and if resisted by the Porte, as it reasonably might be, it was an act of war; and the same observation applied to any occupation of Turkish territory by foreign troops. I had subsequently, in accordance with the opinion of my colleagues, informed Count Schouvaloff that Her Majesty's Government could not approve, or be parties to, any part of the proposed scheme; and it had been agreed upon between Her Majesty's Government and that of Russia that another method should be adopted of extricating ourselves and all the Powers from the difficulty in which we are placed by the refusal of the Porte to consent to the basis of peace proposed. I had accordingly instructed Sir H. Elliot to press strongly for an armistice of not less than a month, with the view that, when granted, it should be followed by a Conference in which the nature of the reforms necessary for the protection of the subject populations of Turkey might be discussed. To this demand, which had been made only within the last thirty-six hours, I had not yet received a reply.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 128

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 6, 5.40 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

Belgrade, October 6, 1876, 3.25 P.M.

FOREIGN Minister says that fresh instances of mutilation of Servian wounded are reported from head-quarters, and expressed desire that the Consular body should send down some one to view these bodies. I have told him that distance is considerable, and that the Servian General might send to Turkish Commander-in-chief and to Sir A. Kemball, with a view to making representations. I have informed him that I should likewise report to Her Majesty's Government this circumstance.

Foreign Minister assures me he is most desirous of armistice, provided it is formally concluded as such matters ought to be.

Doc. 129

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 621.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 6, 1876.

THE Turkish Ambassador called upon me this afternoon and communicated to me the telegram from his Government, of which I inclose a copy,* protesting against the proposal which they understood had been made for a military occupation of Bosnia and Bulgaria, and for the entry of the united fleets into the Bosphorus.

I told Musurus Pasha that Her Majesty's Government had refused their assent to the measures of occupation suggested by Russia, and had also objected to the proposal that the fleets should enter the Bosphorus.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 130

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Monson.

(No. 5.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 6, 1876.

I INCLOSE copy of a despatch from the Turkish Ministry for Foreign Affairs,† communicated to me by the Turkish Ambassador, in which is inclosed a report presented to the military authorities by Dr. Zoëros, Director of the Sanitary Department of the army of Podgoritzza, giving a list of soldiers who had been horribly mutilated by the Montenegrins.

I inclose also copy of a despatch which was received in the course of last month from Her Majesty's Consul at Scutari,‡ in which he states that he had seen in hospital nine Turkish soldiers, who, after having been wounded in battle, had been brutally mutilated, and that there was every reason to believe that the men he saw had not been subjected to exceptional treatment, but that most of the wounded and dead in the battlefield of Medun had been treated with similar atrocity.

* No. 125.

[Editor's note: This is Doc. 126 in this volume.]

† No. 41.

‡ See Part V of Correspondence, No. 486.

As the report now officially received from the Porte merely confirms the statements previously made by an impartial and trustworthy eye-witness, there can be little doubt that it is substantially correct, and that outrages have been committed by the Montenegrins on helpless men on the field of battle, which are a disgrace to humanity.

Your presence at Cettigné enables Her Majesty's Government to make known to the Prince the feelings with which they have read the reports submitted to them, and I should therefore wish you to state to him that, if the war should continue, it cannot be too strongly urged upon him that he should use every effort to induce his subjects to refrain from acts of cruelty, which cannot but alienate the sympathies of civilized nations, and seriously discredit his own reputation.

Doc. 131 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 6, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Most Confidential.)

Vienna, October 6, 1876, 5.11 P.M.

I AM assured by one of my colleagues that the German Ambassador and the members of his Embassy speak openly of the expediency of Russia being allowed not only to occupy Bulgaria, but to advance to Constantinople, as the Emperor Alexander has disclaimed any intention of annexing Turkish territory to his Empire.

The Ambassador professes to me that he is without instructions on the subject, but he lately asked me in a private conversation why England should object to the freedom of the Dardanelles and to European Turkey being replaced by several independent Christian States.

I hesitate to report this private conversation, but feel it necessary to do so in consequence of above-mentioned statement of my colleagues, which increases my apprehension that if the Ambassadors leave Constantinople, what I saw in 1827 will happen again, and that their departure will be followed a few days afterwards by a Russian declaration of war.

Doc. 132

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 6, 7.45 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, October 6, 1876, 5.26 P.M.

I HAVE acquainted Count Andrassy with the substance of your Lordship's telegram of yesterday to Lord A. Loftus, and with your having instructed Sir H. Elliot to inform Porte that it is intended that the armistice asked for shall be followed by a Conference.

His Excellency said he cannot assent to take a part in a Conference until he knows how it is to be composed and the objects which it is proposed to obtain from it, and in the present state of things he can only anticipate its leading to abortive or dangerous results. Is Turkey, he asked, to be represented in the Conference, and if she is not is it probable that she will agree to carry out its decisions?

If therefore it is intended to propose an ultimatum to be submitted to Porte the Governments must be prepared to use force to impose it, and in the present temper of the Turkish Government and the excitement of the Russian nation, he fears whatever decision may be taken will inevitably lead to war.

On the general question he expressed strong opinions against expediency of asking for concessions which the Porte cannot grant, instead of being satisfied with moderate measures which could be easily carried out. It is clear, he said, that every step in advance beyond what is absolutely necessary, on the part of one of the Powers will be followed by a further one on the part of another Power, as England's adding new administrative institutions for Bulgaria to her demands on the Porte was immediately followed up by Russia proposing to occupy Bulgaria.

Doc. 133 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 6.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, October 6, 1876, 5.27 P.M.

MONSON telegraphs as follows:—

"With reference to my telegram of this morning, Prince Nicholas says that in view of his difficult situation with his chiefs, who desire resumption of hostilities, he implores the Great Powers to bring about a definite armistice."

Doc. 134

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 6, 8.30 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, October 6, 1876, 6.50 P.M.

FOLLOWING from Monson :—

"At the request of Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Prince Nicholas consents to remain on the defensive, and to victual fortress of Medun for three days.

"His Highness is resisting firmly pressure of certain Montenegrins to resume offensive. Russian Agent has suddenly become moderate.

"All my colleagues report to their Governments in favour of concessions to Montenegro."

Doc. 135

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 8.)

(No. 846. Very Confidential.)

My Lord,

Paris, October 7, 1876.

PRINCE ORLOFF, the Russian Ambassador here, observed to me this morning that there was one danger connected with the present state of the Eastern question, of which people in general were probably not aware. It was, he conceived, by no means impossible that the Turks, if they thought they could not escape coercive measures, would be inclined to seek a war with Russia. Their object in doing so would, he said, be to get rid in this way of the intervention of the other Powers, and place themselves in a position to treat with Russia alone. He had reason to believe that they imagined that by promptly submitting to the Emperor after a first defeat, and throwing themselves upon the generosity of His Majesty, they should obtain much more tolerable terms from him than would be accorded to them by a Conference of all the Great Powers.

There was, the Prince thought, a good foundation for the belief that in such a case the Emperor Alexander would be personally disposed to deal very generously with the Turks, but there would be a very great danger if a war were once begun that the current of events might be too strong for His Majesty. No one could say whither this current might carry Russia, nor when it might be possible to arrest it.

The Prince proceeded to tell me some anecdotes of communications between his father and the Emperor Nicholas, tending to show that in 1854 the Turks had seriously thought of simply appealing to the generosity of the Emperor, and that, in fact, His Majesty had reckoned on their doing so.

He went on to say that, under the influence of General Ignatiev, Sultan Abdul Aziz had, a short time before his deposition, contemplated making such an appeal to the Emperor Alexander, who would undoubtedly be disposed to yield a great deal in response to a direct appeal from a brother Sovereign to his magnanimity.

I may observe to your Lordship that Sadig Pasha, the Ottoman Ambassador here, speaking theoretically of the various courses which were open to the Porte in the present emergency, said to me that, if pushed to extremities by the Powers, her best course would be to beg the rest to retire and leave her alone with Russia. Some of the conditions which Russia might impose, as, for instance, the opening of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus to her ships of war, might be unpalatable to the Powers; but, as far as the Turks themselves were concerned, Sadig Pasha was confident that they would be able to make with Russia such terms as would enable them to live comfortably and peaceably some time longer.

I hinted to Sadig Pasha that by identifying themselves in this way with Russia, the Turks would destroy one of the principal reasons for which their presence in Europe was tolerated by the other Powers.

There were certainly, when I was at Constantinople nine years ago, some selfish, indolent fatalists among the Turks, who held that their best policy would be simply to curry favour with Russia in the hope that they should thus escape being teased about reforms, and that in this way a comfortable easy state of things, which would last their own time, might be produced. I did not, however, hear of their contemplating so desperate a measure as an actual war with Russia as a step towards getting rid of the councils of the other Powers, and throwing themselves entirely upon Russian magnanimity.

I have, &c.

(Signed) LYONS.

Doc. 136 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 8.)

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, October 7, 1876, 10 P.M.

AT my audience to-day Sultan spoke of the ancient sympathies between Great Britain and Turkey, founded as he believed on common interests.

He could hardly understand how proposals which might have been expected from Russia could have been made by Her Majesty's Government.

I said that in the position of affairs it was necessary for your Lordship to bring forward the propositions to which you could secure the assent of the other Governments, and that if Her Majesty's Government would have been perhaps satisfied with less, His Majesty might be assured that it was only through their exertions that more onerous conditions had not been insisted upon by others.

I told him that if his Government rejected those conditions, and at the same time refused to agree to an armistice, I had been instructed to leave Constantinople, as Her Majesty's Government could do no more to avert the ruin which such a decision would call down upon the Empire.

He said he could give no answer about the armistice, as his Ministers were then in Council deliberating upon it.

Doc. 137 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 8.)

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, October 8, 1876, noon.

I HAVE received following from Bucharest:—

“Russian force in Bessarabia probably much exaggerated.

“Traffic Manager told me on Wednesday that the railway authorities had been sounded from Russia respecting capacity of rolling stock. Minister for Foreign Affairs says it is not true. Traffic Manager's statement has been written to your Excellency and to London.”

Doc. 138 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 8, 5.30 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, October 8, 1876, noon.

ON the 2nd instant I telegraphed to Her Majesty's Consul at Bosna-Seraï as follows:—

“Canon Liddon and a friend who went to Servia by the Bosnian frontier state that they saw examples of revolting cruelties practised by Turkish officers of regular army, who have impaled at all the military stations along the frontier men and women. Report as to truth of this statement.”

On the 5th instant I received following reply:—

“Everything known here would make statement in your telegram of 2nd instant perfectly incredible but for the name of your Excellency's informant. I will write of this by next post.”

Doc. 139 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 8, 5.30 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, October 8, 1876, 12.45 P.M.

FROM a conversation that I have just had with the Minister for Foreign Affairs I have great expectation that the Porte will agree to an armistice.

I hope, also, that the answer of the Porte may be still so far modified as to be an acceptance rather than a rejection of the conditions of peace proposed by your Lordship.

Minister asked me whether, in the event of the conditions being accepted, a Conference would still be proposed.

I said that it had been talked of on the supposition of their rejection by the Porte, but I could not say what the decision of the Powers might be in the event of the Porte accepting the conditions as the basis of peace.

There is so much dread of a Conference that the hope of avoiding one by accepting the propositions has great influence on the Turkish Ministers.

Doc. 140 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 8, 6 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, October 8, 1876, 1.50 P.M.

THE Minister for Foreign Affairs asked about the manner in which the armistice, if accepted, would be arranged. I said that the Powers having proposed to mediate for it, would, I imagined, through their own officers, concert for conditions and observance.

He asked what security there would be that the Servians would not occupy the positions from which the Turks withdrew.

I answered that I could say no more than that the Powers which had proposed to arrange the armistice would feel themselves under the obligation of rendering it equitable, and of seeing that it was properly observed by both parties, according to the rules of war.

Doc. 141
(No. 418.)

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 8, 1876.

I GATHER from your Excellency's telegram of the 6th instant that Count Andrassy has stated that he would not be disposed to assent to a Conference until he should be satisfied as to its composition and objects.

I am not surprised to learn that he should have expressed this hesitation, which is not unnatural, but I should wish you to explain to him that it had never been contemplated by Her Majesty's Government that a Conference should assemble until a basis should have been arranged which should define the subjects to be considered and secure their being confined within certain limits.

Her Majesty's Government expressed their opinion that, if the terms of peace should be refused by the Porte and an armistice accepted, a Conference should meet, because this appeared to them to be the best, if not the only, means of bringing about an agreement as to the course to be pursued, and because the meeting of the Powers in Conference would afford the best security that could be found against independent action on the part of any one Power without the consent of the others.

It is also obvious that the meeting of a Conference—a course which would be in accordance with usage on previous occasions, when the concert of the Powers has been desired on Turkish affairs—would have the advantage of affording time for the excitement in Russia to subside, which is now one of the principal obstacles to a pacific solution of existing difficulties.

Your Excellency will lay these considerations before Count Andrassy, and will explain to him that all that is asked of him at present is that he should not object to the principle of a Conference.

If he accepts that principle Her Majesty's Government will gladly join with him in endeavouring to arrange a satisfactory basis upon which the deliberations shall be regulated.

Concerted action on the part of the Powers is at the present moment of the most vital importance, as in the interests of peace it is essential that the Porte should not be encouraged to persist in an obdurate refusal of the terms of pacification and of the armistice by its supposing that the harmony of ideas which induced all the Powers to support the British proposals no longer exists.

Her Majesty's Government earnestly hope, therefore, that Count Andrassy will not use any language at Constantinople which could be so construed as to encourage further resistance.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 142

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 8, 11 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

Belgrade, October 8, 1876, noon.

NONE of my colleagues except the French Consul have as yet received instructions to press acceptance of armistice at Belgrade.

I asked Sir H. Elliot to communicate to me decision of the Porte in this matter, as, if Turkish Government should refuse a formal armistice, details of which to be effective

would have to be arranged between Commanders-in-chief of the two armies, any steps taken here would only make matters worse between Russia and the Porte.

Russian Representative here can obtain Prince Milan's consent whenever he chooses ; and the last informal truce would no doubt have been prolonged (thus saving much useless bloodshed) if this Consul had thought proper to put in a favourable word for it with Prince Milan.

Doc. 143 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.— (Received October 9.)

(No. 684. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Vienna, October 4, 1876.

I HAVE been unable until to-day, to obtain any positive information at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, as to the decision which has been taken by the Emperor's Government, respecting the proposal of Russia for the occupation of the northern European Provinces of Turkey. On calling however at the Ministry this morning, Baron Orczy stated to me, that Count Andrassy had authorised him to acquaint me with a communication, which the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires in London has been instructed to make to your Lordship on the subject.

He said that respecting the letter which had been addressed to the Emperor by the Emperor Alexander, and the answer which had been given to it, he had of course nothing to say ; but that Count Somorukoff had also been the bearer of a communication to the Austrian-Hungarian Government from the Government of Russia, by which it was proposed, in the event of the Porte giving an unsatisfactory answer to the proposals of the Great Powers, now under its consideration, measures should be taken to enforce its acquiescence in them ; and suggesting that the most effectual means of doing so, would be the occupation of Bulgaria by Russian, and of Bosnia by Austro-Hungarian troops, while a combined fleet of the maritime Powers should enter the Bosphorus.

He said that I must be aware that Count Andrassy had always considered any occupation of Turkish territory would be inexpedient, and that such a measure would not be a satisfactory manner of pacifying the insurgent Provinces, or of introducing reforms into their administration ; and his Excellency had therefore, he said, declined to adopt it, and had endeavoured to satisfy the Russian Government that the object which they have in view will be more safely and certainly secured by the employment of naval means alone.

I answered, that I felt assured, from what is known to Her Majesty's Government of the opinions of Prince Gortchakow, that the limitation, desired by Count Andrassy, of coercive measures to the appearance of an allied fleet in the Bosphorus, would be assented to at Livadia ; but I asked whether his Excellency had fully considered how his suggestion was to be carried out ; did he expect thus to avoid war, and that the Government of the Sultan would permit a fleet, evidently intended for a hostile purpose, to pass the Dardanelles unresisted. As Baron Orczy answered that he thought resistance improbable, since to oppose the passage of such a fleet would be to declare war against united Europe, I said that the Sultan would have a more immediate danger to apprehend under the circumstances than even a war against Europe. The people of Constantinople believed that the Dardanelles could not be forced, and the appearance, therefore, of an hostile fleet before Constantinople, which had been allowed to pass the Dardanelles without resistance, would evidently be followed by a justifiable outbreak of popular indignation against the Sultan and his Ministers, who would probably be sacrificed as traitors.

On the other hand, I said, it appeared to me that a naval demonstration from Besika Bay would prove ineffectual, as if the Porte is deterred now by public opinion from accepting the proposals of the Powers, it would be equally so, on the appearance of the fleet before the Castles of the Dardanelles, which the population of Constantinople would believe it could not pass ; and if this should be so, the Powers would then be obliged to carry out their menace, and a war would ensue, the commencement of which would probably be made memorable by the loss of several of the vessels of the allied fleet, and, if the Turkish Government still resisted on its arrival at Constantinople, by the Christians of the capital as well as the Turks having to suffer the disastrous consequences of a bombardment.

I said that I was entirely ignorant of the opinions of Her Majesty's Government on this subject, and as to the answer they were likely to give to the overtures made to them. But it appeared to me, that the considerations, which I had just suggested to him, should be duly weighed by Governments desirous of coercing the Porte without their measures

actually culminating in war. I then said that your Lordship had sent instructions yesterday to Sir Henry Elliot, to warn the Porte against persisting in its announced intention to refuse the proposals of Her Majesty's Government, as the alternative scheme of general reforms and a note is certain to be considered inadmissible, and that much more onerous terms of peace will undoubtedly be afterwards proposed, and pressed upon Turkey very probably by force.

I said I feared it was more to be desired than to be hoped that this warning may have some influence on the Turkish Ministers, and the question will probably then arise as to whether the concessions it has made are entirely unacceptable. I should, therefore, like much to know Count Andrassy's views on this point, and whether he is of opinion that some means may be found of effectually securing out of the institutions offered by the Sultan for the Provinces of the Empire generally, all that has been claimed for the three northern ones. Baron Orczy professed not to know what decision his Excellency is likely to come to on the subject; but he would mention to me confidentially that the Servian Government is greatly discouraged by the recent events of the war, and has again appealed to the Government of the Emperor to use its influence at Constantinople with a view to the restoration of peace. It is, therefore, most desirable that the Porte should assent to such an armistice in Servia, as she has already done in Montenegro, and if it were granted he believed that the other points at issue could be more susceptible of an arrangement.

I told his Excellency that I had found the Turkish Ambassador, whom I met in his ante-room, highly pleased at learning that Count Andrassy had refused to occupy Bosnia, and confident that Austria would not be a party to any hostile measures against the Porte; and I had, therefore, cautioned him not to make himself responsible for the expression of such an opinion at Constantinople. I asked Baron Orczy, however, whether Count Zichy is not in a position to urge on the Porte its assent to an armistice, in return for the service rendered to it by Austria, in declining to occupy Turkish territory. But his Excellency said that if Count Zichy were to take credit for the decision of his Government as a friendly act towards Turkey, it might lead the Turkish Ministers to place confidence in the opinion which Alecko Pasha will possibly express to them, that Austria-Hungary will not be a party to enforcing on the Sultan the adoption of the proposals of the Powers.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Doc. 144 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 9.)

(No. 686. Most Confidential.)

My Lord,

Vienna, October 4, 1876.

THE Turkish Ambassador had an interview with Count Andrassy two days ago to acquaint his Excellency with the objections of the Porte to signing a Protocol by which it would engage to concede administrative autonomy to Bosnia and the Herzegovina, and he gave me to understand that his Excellency did not express much dissatisfaction on the subject, and had intimated that if the Porte brought forward counter proposals they might possibly be found acceptable by the Powers.

This statement is entirely inconsistent with the action of Count Zichy at Constantinople, many of whose telegraphic reports of his co-operation with Sir Henry Elliot have been communicated to me; but if it be true that Count Andrassy has held such language to Alecko Pasha, and it has been reported at Constantinople, it may have encouraged the Turkish Ministers to maintain their intention to give an unsatisfactory answer to the proposals of Her Majesty's Government, notwithstanding the earnest warning conveyed to them in your Lordship's instructions to Sir Henry Elliot of the 3rd instant.

It is not improbable, however, that when Count Andrassy spoke to Alecko Pasha he may have, in his reply to the Russian overtures, suggested that a programme should be combined from the concessions offered by the Porte and the reforms which he recently submitted to the consideration of the Governments of Great Britain, Russia, and Germany. At all events, he had frequent and long interviews with Count Sumarokoff, during which they may possibly have come to an agreement on this subject, and Count Andrassy may have made the adoption of his views by the Russian Government a condition of his agreeing to enforce an arrangement on the acceptance of the Porte, a supposition which would be consistent with an opinion of his Excellency, which I reported in a telegram of the 12th ultimo.

If Alecko Pasha is to be believed, he spoke to him of "his convictions," which would prevent his occupying Turkish territory; and he reminded him also that, as a Magyar, he could not wish to add to the Slav Provinces of Austria Hungary, or to promote the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Doc. 145 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 9.)

(No. 688. Most Confidential.)

My Lord,

Vienna, October 5, 1876.

THE curiosity of the Diplomatic Body was somewhat excited here about ten days ago by Count Andrassy's having, contrary to his usual practice, paid an evening visit to the Turkish Ambassador, and spent some time with him.

I now learn from Alecko Pasha that his Excellency's object was to induce him to write to the Grand Vizier urging the Porte to conclude an armistice with Servia, and at the same time to ask for the good offices of the Great Powers to obtain the recall of the Russians from that Principality. Alecko Pasha said that, as his Excellency was anxious that the Russian Government should not know that he had made this request, he communicated it to the Grand Vizier by a private letter, to which he had not yet received an answer, but he is hopeful that the Porte may, therefore, still assent to the armistice proposed by Her Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Doc. 146 Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 9.)

(No. 427.)

My Lord,

Berlin, October 3, 1876.

EDBEN PASHA, the Turkish Ambassador, communicated this morning to Herr von Bülow a telegram stating that the General Council adhered to the Hatti-Houmayoun and confirmed the reforms granted to all the Provinces of the Empire, and that their decision would be officially communicated by identic notes to the Embassies at Constantinople.

The terms of Peace and the Protocol recommended by the Powers were not more admissible than the Berlin Memorandum, and could therefore not be entertained by the Porte, but the scheme of general reforms about to be applied to the whole Empire would meet all the legitimate wishes and wants of the Sultan's subjects. The telegram made no allusion to the armistice.

Herr von Bülow has communicated the Turkish Ambassador's message to Prince Bismarck, who is still in the country.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 147 Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 9.)

(No. 432. Secret.)

My Lord,

Berlin, October 7, 1876.

I TELEGRAPHED on the 3rd instant to your Lordship that I had reason to think that the Emperor William was favourable to the Czar's Eastern policy, and hoped the Emperor of Austria might give it his support.

My impression has since been confirmed; and I learn on good authority that if a serious difference of opinion were to arise between Austria and Russia, the Emperor William's sympathies would be in favour of supporting the Czar, to whom he feels bound by family ties, by personal regard and friendship, and by gratitude for the moral support Russia gave Germany in the wars against Denmark, Austria, and France.

After the meeting of the Emperors of Russia and Austria at Reichstadt, some suspicion arose in Prince Bismarck's mind that they had come to a secret agreement, which was concealed from the German Government, and when later Prince Gortchakow proposed a Conference, Prince Bismarck advised the Emperor William to decline the proposal.

The Czar was so deeply offended at his uncle's refusal that the Emperor William regretted his decision, and sought an excuse for an explanation which might lead to the re-establishment of cordial relations between them. He found one in the congratulatory mission of Field-Marshal Count Manteuffel, and intrusted him with a private letter to the Czar, the contents of which are not known, but the effects of which were all he could desire, as your Lordship has already learnt from the despatches of Her Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg.

It appears, however, that General Manteuffel, who is a devoted adherent of a Russian alliance, on returning from his mission, reported to the Emperor William, and later proceeded to Varzin to report to Prince Bismarck that the impression he brought back from Russia was that, thanks to the cunning of Prince Gortchakow and to the intrigues of Count Schouvaloff, a practical and cordial understanding between Russia and England would be brought about which might some day prove inconvenient in its effects to Germany, and he strongly urged his Imperial master and the Chancellor to be on their guard lest other alliances should follow, and separate them from their old and trusty Russian friends, on whom they had hitherto always been able to rely.

There can be no doubt that the Emperor William was much impressed by General Manteuffel's views and advice, and that His Majesty's sympathies are now more than ever enlisted in favour of the Czar's policy in Turkey. Besides which, the Emperor William dislikes the Emperor of Austria personally, and distrusts his policy, which has undergone so many different phases since 1849; and His Majesty, like Prince Bismarck, looks upon Count Andrassy as the only friend Germany has and can trust in Austria.

What impression General Manteuffel's views may have made on Prince Bismarck nobody knows. He has shut himself up at Varzin, where he devotes himself to the management of his estate, and to the prosecution of those among his tenants who will not pay their rent, and he avoids committing himself to any opinion on the political questions of the day beyond the general assurance that he will give his support to the maintenance of peace in Europe.

If, in the coming negotiations, Prince Bismarck should incline to support Austria against Russia, he will have to sustain a conflict, as he has so often done before, with his Imperial master, and it is probably for that reason that he is not favourable to the idea of a Conference, in which he will have to adopt a more distinct line of policy than he has hitherto done in Eastern affairs.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 148

Ali Pasha, Governor-General of the Herzegovina, to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, October 9.)

(Télégraphique.)

Mostar, le 7 Octobre, 1876.

DE Trébinje on me mande que le 4 et le 5 courant les Monténégrins ont ouvert le feu contre nos positions de Saslap, et que les nôtres y ont répondu. Hier un corps ennemi est venu attaquer Jurinje, dont quelques maisons furent brûlées. Des dispositions ont été prises pour repousser cette attaque.

Doc. 149

Ali Pasha, Governor-General of the Herzegovina, to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, October 10.)

(Télégraphique.)

Mostar, le 8 Octobre, 1876.

SUITE de mon télégramme d'avant-hier :—

“ ‘Bulletin de Trébinje’ annonce que ce matin l'armée de Moukhtar Pacha a pris d'assaut les retranchements de Nomadich et Boyanobrdo, entre Grahovitza et Grahova. Les Monténégrins, après avoir subi de fortes pertes, se sont enfuis en désordre en laissant une grande quantité de munitions et d'armes entre les mains des troupes Impériales. Hier la garnison de Luibigne avec la population a repoussé les insurgés, qui s'enfuirent vers le Monténégro.”

Doc. 150

The Duc Decazes to the Marquis d'Harcourt.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by the Marquis d'Harcourt, October 9.)

(Télégraphique.)

Paris, le 9 Octobre, 1876, 3 h. 20 matin.

LE Prince Orloff vient de me communiquer le télégramme suivant :—

“*Livadia*, le ^{26 Septembre}_{8 Octobre}, 1876.

“Si l’armistice est accordé nous consentons à la Conférence proposée par l’Angleterre, à condition qu’elle ne soit composée que des Représentants des Six Grandes Puissances sans participation de la Porte, qui n’aurait à se prononcer que sur l’issue de ses délibérations. Si l’armistice est refusé, nous rompons nos relations diplomatiques avec la Porte. L’Autriche a promis d’en faire autant. Nous croyons que l’Allemagne ne restera pas en arrière.

“La même attitude du Gouvernement auprès duquel vous êtes accrédité serait désirable.”

(Signé)

“LE PRINCE GORTCHAKOW.”

J’ai répondu au Prince :—

“En effet la Conférence, si elle se tentait à Constantinople, serait naturellement composée des Représentants des Six Grandes Puissances aujourd’hui accrédités près la Sublime Porte; mais il y aurait tout avantage à se réserver le droit et la possibilité de les assister ou de les remplacer par des délégués *ad hoc*, l’intervention de ces derniers porteurs des instructions verbales de leurs Gouvernements étant de nature à offrir des facilités et des simplifications utiles. Mais il semblerait impossible de refuser à la Porte entrée et représentation à la Conférence. L’exclusion du Délégué Ottoman donnerait lieu à justifier le droit à une protestation formelle fondée sur l’Article VIII du Traité du 30 Mars, 1856.

“J’ai volontairement ajournée toute réponse à la partie de sa communication relative à l’attitude à prendre en cas de refus de l’armistice par la Porte.

“Je ne lui ai pas laissé ignorer l’avis que, en ce qui touche à la rupture des relations diplomatiques, j’aurais à me préoccuper en à des dangers qu’elle pourrait faire courir aux nationaux étrangers résident en Turquie, aussi bien que des suites qu’elle pourrait avoir, et comme manifestation j’ai du faire remarquer que l’effet en serait plus dangereux qu’efficace, surtout si elle n’était pas l’objet d’un accord préalable et unanime. Du reste il a été convenu que cette dernière éventualité restant en dehors de nos prévisions actuelles ne pouvait faire l’objet d’une réponse immédiate.”

(Signé)

DECAZES.

Doc. 151 *Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received October 9, 4.26 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Confidential.)

Therapia, October 9, 1876, 1.55 P.M.

GRAND VIZIER has sent in his resignation, but it is not yet known whether the Sultan has succeeded in inducing him to withdraw it.

If he should persist, and it should appear that he resigns rather than give way to the pressure put upon the Porte by the Powers, the consequences may be very serious.

Doc. 152
(No. 626.)

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 9, 1876.

I HAVE received your Excellency’s despatch No. 1060 of the 25th ultimo, and I approve of your intention to see that the vacancy on the Commission sent to Bulgaria by the Porte, caused by the ill-health of one of the Christian members, is filled up by another person of the same belief.

With regard to your statement that 200 Circassian irregulars have been sent to the district of Philippopoli, I have to remark that Her Majesty’s Government had understood that the use of these irregular troops would be discontinued.

If the irregular troops referred to are of the same class as those by whom the atrocities were committed, your Excellency will protest in the strongest terms against their employ-

ment in defiance of the public opinion of Europe and in disregard of the assurances given by the Porte to your Excellency.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 153
(No. 419.)
Sir,

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

Foreign Office, October 9, 1876.

THE Austrian Ambassador, who returned to his post yesterday, called upon me to-day, and read to me a despatch from Count Andrassy to Count Wolkenstein, dated the 17th September, with the contents of which I understood that it was intended I should have been made acquainted at the time of its receipt.

The despatch sets forth the objections of the Austrian Government to the proposal of administrative autonomy for the insurgent Provinces of Turkey, which Count Andrassy states that they cannot accept as a satisfactory programme. The term is vague, capable of contrary interpretations, may be construed to mean less than the Powers have asked or the Porte has granted, or may, on the contrary, be taken to signify a real and complete autonomy. But, in the latter case, the Christians would at once ask for the removal of the Turkish troops, a concession which the Porte could not make.

The vagueness of the proposal would excite hopes which it would be impossible to realise; and this with a suffering population is always dangerous. But even supposing that the proposal could be put into a definite and practical shape, who is to compel the Porte to accept it?

Is the British Government prepared, Count Andrassy asks, to use force in order to compel the acceptance of these conditions? Can it do so, and yet maintain the integrity of the Turkish Empire?

These are points, Count Andrassy thinks, on which we ought to be clear before committing ourselves to any course such as that proposed, otherwise the Christian population will be led to expect more than can be given them, and will refuse to be satisfied with the concessions which are really practicable. Unless we are prepared to say that the Turkish Empire must fall, we cannot go beyond certain limits, and must confine ourselves to such conditions as can be imposed upon the Porte by pacific means, and by the moral pressure which a common action of all the Powers must exercise.

The proposals of reform put forward last winter by the Austrian Government, Count Andrassy says, were accepted by the insurgents as in their essence sufficient; all that they required was that there should be guarantees for their due execution. The same proposals would probably be accepted now. They are clear, precise, and easy to carry into effect. The term autonomy, on the other hand, seems to the Austrian Government to have no signification unless it means the cessation of Turkish power.

The acceptance by the Austrian Government of the proposal for local autonomy as subsequently defined and explained seems to have deprived this despatch of most of its practical importance for present purposes; but I told Count Beust that I would take note of the reasons which had induced his Government to hesitate in giving their assent.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 154
(No. 420.)
Sir,

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

Foreign Office, October 9, 1867.

THE Austrian Ambassador called upon me this afternoon by appointment upon his return to his post, and read to me a telegram which he had received from Count Andrassy, giving the reasons of the Austrian Government for objecting to the plan of a Conference to meet on the conclusion of an armistice between Turkey and her opponents.

Count Andrassy asks what would be the object of the deliberations of the Conference. The Powers are already agreed upon the basis of peace. The question to be discussed, therefore, is that of the means to be employed in order to bring the Porte to accept these conditions. And upon this question another instantly arises. Is Turkey to be represented at the Conference? If she is so represented, she must appear on an equality with the rest, and upon that footing she is not likely to concede to the representations of a Conference, in which there are sure to be differences of opinion, that which she has refused

to the united demand of Europe. If, on the contrary, she is excluded from the Conference, she will draw from this a legitimate argument for denying its competency, and we are once more in presence of the problem of employing measures of coercion.

We must also consider, says Count Andrassy, the difficult position in which the Emperor Alexander will be placed in case the Porte refuses to submit to the decisions of a Conference. The Emperor Alexander is desirous of peace, but we know also that he is being urged in a contrary direction.

The Austrian Government state, however, that they do not wish to thwart the action of England, and are only anxious to have a thorough understanding upon the whole question.

They wish, therefore, to know—

1. Whether the Porte is to take part in the Conference?
2. Where the Conference is to meet?
3. If the Conference is to be composed of the Foreign Ministers of the respective countries, or of Plenipotentiaries?
4. What is to be the programme of the Conference?

It will depend upon the information derived from the answers to these questions whether they can waive the objections they now entertain to the idea. Until then they are of opinion that a Commission at Constantinople, such as had previously been suggested, would be a preferable plan, and would more profitably employ the time allowed by the armistice.

As Count Beust did not ask for an immediate reply to the above queries, I told his Excellency that I must reserve my opinion on the first point, namely, whether or no the Porte should be represented in the Conference. It would be necessary to ascertain the views of other Powers, which were still unknown to me.

As to the second question I must equally reserve a final expression of opinion; but, personally, I was inclined to think that Constantinople would be on various accounts the most convenient place of meeting.

As to the third, I considered that the personal attendance of the various foreign Ministers at a Conference whose sittings might last some time, would be in many respects unadvisable.

As to the fourth, I agreed in the view which I understood to be that of Count Andrassy, that a Conference without a basis was not likely to lead to good results; and I thought that a programme, more or less definite, ought to be agreed upon before it met; but the terms of such programme would require care in framing, and I could only say that it should be submitted to the Powers in due course.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 155 Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 9, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

St. Petersburg, October 9, 1876, 3.10 P.M.

THE tone of Russian press is in favour of Russian occupation of Turkish territory. Military preparations are being made. On the 4th instant, sum of near 5,000,000*l.* sterling was applied for military purposes; on the 6th instant, orders were received here to expend 1,000,000*l.* sterling on forage. Heavy guns have been sent to Otchakoff, Kertch, and Sebastopol.

In Servia Russian Volunteers amount to 10,000 men, exclusive of 2,000 Cossacks. 60,000 men are concentrated at Alexandropol on the Armenian frontier.

Doc. 156 Mr. Malet to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 9.)

(Telegraphic.)

Rome, October 9, 1876.

RUSSIAN Ambassador has informed Italian Government that his Government object to the presence of a Turkish Representative at the Conference.

Minister for Foreign Affairs has withheld opinion in replying to the Russian Ambassador, but tells me confidentially that he considers the pretension to exclude the Porte to be extraordinary, and (opposed to ?) the VIIIth Article of the Treaty of Paris.

Doc. 157 *Mr. Malet to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received October 9, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

Rome, October 9, 1876, 5.30 P.M.

RUSSIAN Ambassador has asked the Minister for Foreign Affairs whether the instructions sent to the Italian Minister at Constantinople to support Sir H. Elliot and to follow his example in threatening to quit Constantinople if the armistice is refused, are intended seriously or merely as a threat.

The Minister replied that certainly they are serious. He could not suppose that a threat of this nature could be made, unaccompanied by an intention to execute it.

Doc. 158 *Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received October 10.)
(No. 1082.)

My Lord,

Therapia, September 29, 1876.

I HAVE the honour to inclose the copy of a confidential report from Mr. Sandison, respecting the present state of public feeling among the Mahometan population.

It is probable that there may be exaggeration of the danger to which the great body of the Christians is exposed; but when the excessive weakness of this Government in the means of protecting them in many parts of the country is taken into consideration, there can be no doubt that their position will be rendered extremely critical, if, after the language that has of late been employed in England, measures should appear to be in progress for giving a practical effect to it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Doc. 159

Inclosure in Doc. 158.

Mr. Sandison to Sir H. Elliot.

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Therapia, September 28, 1876.

NOT to speak of the tone and spirit of the Turkish press in general, including the official organs, the violent opposition made at Tuesday's General Council to anything like local or administrative autonomy to Bosnia, Herzegovina, and Bulgaria, plainly shows the national determination to resist any concessions that might place those Provinces in an exceptional position.

Whilst the true meaning of "administrative autonomy," which, though sufficiently explained, continues to be misunderstood by many, the general prejudice against the term itself is so very strong that there is not a Turk who would now acquiesce in its adoption. Then, again, whilst some suppose it to be fraught with danger to the rest of the Empire, and others consider it unbecoming to the national dignity, the majority of the Mussulman public, including the officials of all ranks, are unanimous in saying that they would rather face the dangers with which they are threatened than consent to administrative autonomy for Bosnia, &c.

Thus the reforms which have already been sanctioned quite recently shall, they say, apply to all the provinces alike, but in no other form, and under no other denomination than that proposed by the General Council held at the Porte on Tuesday last.

Three Ministers of State, whose views I heard on the subject, were all of one mind, in stating that if, in the face of the reforms which have just been granted, Europe would not be satisfied, neither the nation nor the Government could possibly go any further. Nor did their Excellencies, speaking for themselves and for the country, make any secret of their determination to abide the worst consequences of a foreign invasion rather than submit to the course now recommended.

The cause of justice being at the same time on their side, every Mussulman, including themselves, down to the lowest official, would know how to struggle in the defence of his country; but if Europe wished for a crusade, as its attitude seemed to imply, she should not lose sight of the safety of the Christians in Turkey if the object in view were not so much to avenge as to protect them.

The feeling of superiority and exasperation prevailing amongst the Mahometans in European Turkey may not, they said, be without its dangers, and the day may come that, before the Powers are in time to pour in their armies, not a Christian may be found

surviving. Such might also be the fate of the Christians inhabiting Asia Minor, the Turks may be driven from thence too, but they cannot all perish, and they hope to meet with sympathy and hospitality in other Mahometan countries, such as Persia, Central Asia, and, perhaps, even India.

Such is the language held by Ministers of State, which I feel it my duty to report to your Excellency, and such, I may say, have been the insinuations of some Ministers under Mahmoud Pasha's administration.

They are typical, indeed, of the national feeling, which is undoubtedly getting stronger every day; and nothing in the face of it is likely to prove more dangerous to the Christian element than a foreign invasion or occupation at the present juncture.

A *levée en masse* of the Mussulman population would not, under the circumstances, be at all improbable, inasmuch as the Turks are already beginning to call for the unfurling of the Prophet's standard, because they suspect that danger for the true faith and for national existence lies already at their door. Whilst these notions cannot but render stronger the feeling of religious fanaticism amongst the Mussulmans, the greater must be the perils which threaten the defenceless Christians.

I have ventured to express these views because I already hear of irritation prevailing on one side, and uneasiness on the other; and it may, perhaps, be as well that I should quote the words of a good authority in these matters, who, writing from Salonica on the 24th instant, says:—

"The speeches and pamphlets which are published, and the agitation prevailing in Europe, may yet do a deal of harm, and may be followed by atrocities far more bloody and extensive than those which were provoked in Bulgaria; if once the idea gains ground amongst the Mahometans that their expulsion from Europe will be attempted, God protect the Christians. From sheer despair there may be an upheaving of Mahometan fanaticism, which may extend to more than one country."

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. SANDISON.

Doc. 160 *Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 10.)*
(No. 1085.)

My Lord,

Therapia, September 30, 1870.

AT the invitation of the Austrian Ambassador I called with him on the Grand Vizier this morning, when the conversation which ensued was so nearly the same as that which I have already reported as having passed between Midhat Pasha and myself, that it is needless to repeat it to your Lordship.

Count Zichy was very energetic in demonstrating the necessity for the Porte of not hesitating in regard to the Protocol, and to the expression of administrative autonomy, as applied to the arrangements to be made for the insurgent provinces; and in doing so intimated, with a frankness that surprised me, the doubts which must be felt as to the real designs of Russia, and the consequent importance of not leaving her a pretext for complaint.

The Grand Vizier said that the Grand Council, which was to have been assembled to-day, had been postponed till to-morrow, as the papers connected with the new reforms, which had been sent to the Sultan, had not been returned from the Palace.

I took the opportunity of pointing out how extremely undesirable it was that the consideration of questions, such as those now before us, should be referred to an assembly constituted like the Grand Council.

They were matters upon which the Sultan's Ministers, with the full knowledge they possessed of the true situation, were alone capable of forming a proper judgment, and they ought not to shrink from the responsibility of taking the steps called for by the vital interests of the Empire.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Doc. 161 *The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.*

(No. 497. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, October 10, 1876.

THE Russian Ambassador told me this afternoon, but as his personal opinion merely, that he thought it not unlikely that his Government would insist on the exclusion

of any Turkish representative from the Conference now proposed. In taking this view his Government would probably be influenced by the following considerations:—

1. It would be undesirable that the Representative of the Porte should be witness to any differences that may exist between the Powers, until these have been settled and the result of the agreement can be submitted to the Porte as a proposal from the united Powers.

2. If it should be necessary for the Conference to obtain evidence or information from delegates or others competent to speak as to the state of the disturbed Provinces and the requirements of the population, these would not be able to speak freely in the presence of the representative of their own Government.

3. If the Porte is represented in a Conference at Constantinople, the Turkish Plenipotentiary will, by diplomatic rule, be entitled to preside over the meeting, which would be inconvenient, and would place the other Plenipotentiaries in a false position. This would be an objection to the Conference being held at Constantinople, which would otherwise seem to be the most convenient place of meeting.

Count Schouvaloff suggested as one method of avoiding these difficulties, that the first sittings of the Conference should be held by the representatives of the six Powers merely, and that the Turkish Government should be invited to send a representative to take part in the discussion as soon as a definitive plan had been agreed upon, at all events in its broader features, which could be submitted to the consideration of the Porte.

His Excellency having explained that the above suggestion was merely the expression of his personal opinion, and that he had not the authority of his Government in making it, I reserved my opinion, merely saying that his Excellency's views should have the fullest consideration on the part of Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 162 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 11.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, October 10, 1876, 9:30 P.M.

GRAND Council has decided to agree to an armistice of five months. This decision will be officially communicated to us to-morrow, and the guaranteeing Powers will, I believe, be invited to make all the arrangements for carrying it out. I have informed Consul-General at Belgrade.

Doc. 163 Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 11.)

(Telegraphic.)

St. Petersburg, October 10, 1876, 10:40 P.M.

FROM secret information received from a military source I learn that Russian proposal to occupy Turkish provinces conjointly with Austria was first declined by the latter, but on the threat of Russia occupying alone with double forces, was unwillingly agreed to, but with what reservations or on what conditions I am not informed.

Mobilization of troops in the four military circles of Kief, Kharkof, Odessa, and Caucasus is now preparing, and my informant stated that the preparations had gone so far that it will be difficult for Russia to withdraw.

Twelve millions of roubles have been actually spent in forage.

The visit of the Roumanian Minister to Livadia to compliment Emperor is also significant.

Doc. 164 The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.†

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, October 11, 1876.

I HAVE pressed upon Count Beust and Count Schouvaloff the importance of their Governments inducing Servia to accept the armistice. Urge this also on Count Andrassy.

[To Paris, Berlin, St. Petersburg, and Rome.]

Speak in the same sense to the Government to which you are accredited.

* Repeated to Embassies

† Sent also to Paris, Berlin, and Rome.

Doc. 165 Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 11.)

(Telegraphic.)

Belgrade, October 11, 1876, noon.

SERVIANS declare readiness to accept an armistice of one month or longer if offered in regular form.

Austrian and Russian Representatives have got instructions, but we cannot make formal proposal before hearing of acceptance by the Porte.

Doc. 166

The Earl of Derby to Consul-General White.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, October 11, 1876, 4.20 P.M.

WITH reference to Sir H. Elliot's telegram repeated to you from Constantinople, use your best endeavours to induce the Servian Government to accept the armistice without raising difficulties.

I have pressed on Russian, Austrian, and other Governments the importance of inducing Servia to accept.

Doc. 167

*The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.**

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, October 11, 1876, 6 P.M.

I CONGRATULATE you on the success of your efforts to bring about an armistice. It is mainly due to your ability and perseverance.

I have pressed on the Russian and Austrian Governments the importance of inducing Servia to accept the armistice.

Doc. 168

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 11.)

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, October 11, 1876, 1.30 P.M.

ON receipt of your Lordship's despatch No. 593 of September 27, inclosing copy of a letter published in the "Times" by the Rev. Thomas Smith about a Bulgarian girl who had been given to a Turkish soldier in payment of his wages, I telegraphed to Mr. Moore, Her Majesty's Consul at Jerusalem, to ascertain all particulars of the case from the Anglican Bishop, and to try to find out the name of the soldier and of his commanding officer in order that I might have the case thoroughly investigated. I have received the following answer from him :—

"The Bishop says that he overheard some people in the street telling the story, and has no further information. I have myself made inquiries, with no result as yet, and will continue them."

Doc. 169 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 11, 8 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, October 11, 1876, 4.10 P.M.

MONSON telegraphs as follows to-day :—

"Prince Nicholas is very angry at the recent raid into the Herzegovina, which was made against his positive orders, and he has summoned the Commander of the expedition to cease hostilities.

"The Montenegrin strategy is to entice Moukhtar Pasha to advance, and then to fall upon his flanks and rear.

"Austrian Military Agent considers Dervish Pasha's advance as well planned and threatening.

"His Highness is dejected and unwell. Much discontent here at the delay of armistice."

Doc. 170
(No. 424.)

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 11, 1876.

THE Austrian Ambassador having called upon me to discuss the Turkish proposition for an armistice of five months' duration, I took the opportunity of urging strongly upon him the importance of inducing the Prince of Servia to accept the proposal without delay or objection. I expressed my fears lest the war party should be too strong both for Prince Milan and his advisers, in which case all the labour that we had expended in bringing the Porte to a wise decision would be thrown away, and the situation would become even more dangerous than before.

Count Beust promised to report what I had said to his Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 171

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 12, 1.21 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

Belgrade, October 12, 1876, 12.10 P.M.

INTELLIGENCE of duration of proposed armistice got known here by private telegram before receipt of mine from Sir H. Elliot. Matter was canvassed and first impression was unfavourable. I fear that chances of an acceptance are doubtful. The pretext will be the continuation of insecurity in neighbourhood of Turkish garrisons.

Doc. 172 *Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 12, 2 P.M.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Paris, October 12, 1876, 11.35 A.M.

FRENCH Minister for Foreign Affairs will send immediately instructions to French Agent at Belgrade to urge the Servians to accept the armistice.

Doc. 173 *Mr. Malet to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 12, 5.45 P.M.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Rome, October 12, 1876, 4.45 P.M.

MINISTER for Foreign Affairs refuses to recommend Servia to accept the armistice of five months unless a better acquaintance with its terms alters his opinion of it, as he considers that it would be ruin to Servia and Montenegro, and that its proposal by the Porte aggravates the situation.

Doc. 174
(No. 639.)

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 12, 1876.

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch No. 547 of the 28th of May last, I transmit to you, for your information, a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General at Bucharest,* reporting his having been received at an audience by the Prince, to present his Letter of Credence, and adding that in consequence of an assurance which he had received from your Excellency that the Porte had recognized the right of the Principalities to assume the title of Roumania, he had substituted that title for the "United Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia," in the letter to the Prince, of which he was the bearer.

As I have received no similar information from your Excellency, I should be glad to hear from you how the matter now stands.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 175
(No. 640.)
Sir,

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

Foreign Office, October 12, 1876.

I HAVE to instruct your Excellency to bring to the knowledge of the Porte Mr. Reade's despatch to your Excellency of the 20th ultimo, inclosing an account of the massacre which took place at Vratza in the month of May last.

Your Excellency will also instruct Mr. Baring to lay the matter before the Bulgarian Commission.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 176

Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 12, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

Bucharest, October 12, 1876.

MINISTER for Foreign Affairs states that one of the conditions of the armistice is that Servia should receive no aid during the six months.

He requested me to say that should this be settled by the Guaranteeing Powers, Roumania would be disposed to act to prevent aid being sent under instructions from the Guaranteeing Powers.

Of course it is assumed that Russia act loyally in a similar sense.

Doc. 177

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 12, at night.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, October 12, 1876, 4 P.M.

I HAVE asked Baron Orczy yesterday whether Count Andrassy was not yet prepared to express an opinion respecting Conference, and as he professed not to know on what his Excellency was likely to decide, I said, as Her Majesty's Government must be expecting an answer to the communication I made to him on the 9th instant, I would call again to-day, when I hoped I might receive one either from Count Andrassy himself or through him.

Therefore, being too unwell to leave the house, I sent Mr. Edwardes to see Baron Orczy to-day, who said that Count Andrassy is expecting every hour to receive from Constantinople the conditions attached to the armistice, and an invitation from the Porte to urge it on the acceptance of the Servian Government; and that, as the conditions of the armistice may have some influence on the basis on which a Conference should meet, he thinks it best to await their arrival before expressing an opinion as to the expediency and objects of a Conference.

Doc. 178

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, October 13.)

(Télégraphique.)

Constantinople, le 12 Octobre, 1876.

LA Sublime Porte vient de consentir à un armistice de six mois expirant fin Mars. Voici la note que j'ai adressée aujourd'hui à ce sujet aux Représentants des Puissances médiatrices à Constantinople :—

“ La Sublime Porte a pris en sérieuse considération la proposition des Puissances médiatrices touchant la conclusion d'un armistice régulier ayant pour but d'amener la suspension des hostilités avec la Serbie et le Monténégro. Dans sa communication du 1^{er} Septembre la Sublime Porte avait fait connaître aux Gouvernements amis les raisons qui ont, eu égard aux termes auxquels la question de la paix elle-même était ramenée, rendu superflue la conclusion d'un armistice en règle. Prenant acte aujourd'hui de la proposition des Puissances pour le rétablissement de la paix avec la Serbie et le Monténégro sur la base du *statu quo ante*, et tout en se déclarant toujours prêt à accepter la décision des Puissances au sujet des conditions proposées

par lui dans sa susdite communication, le Gouvernement Impérial n'hésite pas à donner son consentement à la conclusion d'un armistice régulier. Il est toutefois aisé de reconnaître que, vu l'approche de la mauvaise saison, il y a lieu de prolonger la durée de l'armistice bien au-delà du minimum demandé par les Puissances. Aussi la Sublime Porte croit-elle qu'elle doit comprendre une durée de six mois, commencée le 1^{er} Octobre, finissant 31 Mars v.s.

"Il dépend maintenant des dispositions bienveillantes des Puissances médiatrices de hâter la suspension des hostilités en désignant le plus tôt possible leurs Délégués pour régler l'armistice sur les lieux.

"La Sublime Porte donnera immédiatement de son côté les instructions nécessaires aux commandants des troupes Impériales, et les délégués des Puissances auront à s'entendre avec eux ainsi qu'avec les chefs militaires des deux Principautés sur les détails pratiques, en tenant compte des exigences soulevées et de la nécessité de ne point laisser réoccuper par les Serbes les points qui sont actuellement en la possession des armées Ottomanes. Pleine de confiance dans les sentiments de haute équité des Puissances médiatrices, la Sublime Porte aime à croire en outre qu'elles voudront bien prendre des mesures efficaces et immédiates pour empêcher dans ce cas l'introduction d'armes et de munitions de guerre dans les Principautés et mettre définitivement un terme à l'affluence des volontaires qui viennent au dehors pour prendre une part active à la lutte. Il y a là un fait anormal qui alarme l'opinion publique en même temps qu'il cause au Gouvernement Impérial les plus graves difficultés. Sa continuation amènerait infailliblement des complications sérieuses et rendrait inutile les efforts pacifiques que l'on a en vue de seconder. Le Gouvernement Impérial est en même temps persuadé que les Puissances médiatrices, en faisant comprendre aux deux Principautés la nécessité de respecter religieusement dans l'avenir les obligations imposées par l'armistice, sauront les détourner de toute tentative qui aurait pour effet d'encourager directement ou indirectement les mouvements insurrectionnels dans les provinces limitrophes, et de fournir des secours aux insurgés. En précisant ainsi sa pensée la Sublime Porte espère avoir donné aux Puissances médiatrices une preuve de plus de son désir d'entourer l'armistice qu'elle vient d'accepter de toutes les garanties qui sont indispensables pour la réalisation des intentions amicales qui en ont déterminée la concession. Elle conserve l'assurance que, s'inspirant toujours des mêmes sentiments de sollicitude pour tout ce qui tient à l'honneur, à la dignité et à l'indépendance de l'Empire, les Puissances sauront mettre de côté tout ce qui pourra soulever des obstacles à l'œuvre si désirée de la pacification définitive."

Doc. 179

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, October 13.)

(Particulière et très-pressée.)

(Télégraphique.)

Constantinople, le 13 Octobre, 1876.

DANS un télégramme dont Sir Henry Elliot a donné communication à la Sublime Porte, Lord Derby pose au Gouvernement Impérial l'alternative d'accepter les conditions proposées ou de conclure un armistice en règle. L'Ambassadeur de Sa Majesté Britannique nous a fait pressentir à cette occasion la probabilité de la réunion d'une Conférence, dans le cas où nous nous refuserions à une suspension d'armes.

Ainsi qu'il résulte de la note que j'ai remise hier soir aux Représentants des Six Puissances, la Sublime Porte se déclare prête à accepter un armistice de six mois du 1^{er} Octobre au 31 Mars, vieux style, et s'en remet aux Délégués des Puissances du soin d'en régler les conditions, conformément aux exigences stratégiques de la situation, et de manière à satisfaire à la nécessité d'empêcher dans l'avenir les envois d'armes, aussi bien que le passage des volontaires, et de faire respecter par les deux Principautés les obligations découlant de l'armistice. Je ne doute pas que, sur ces derniers points, les Puissances ne tombent d'accord aisément, et qu'elles ne se montrent animées d'une sollicitude égale pour tout ce qui tient à l'honneur et aux droits de la Sublime Porte.

J'appelle maintenant l'attention de votre Excellence sur la question de la Conférence. La réunion projetée, si elle avait lieu, causerait tout au moins le danger de certains entraînements dont nous sommes en droit de nous préoccuper. Quand même nous entrerions dans cet aréopage Européen avec un programme arrêté de réformes, il pourrait surgir, dans le cours des pourparlers, des faits et des incidents qui, en amenant les parties à dépasser les limites tracées d'un commun accord, obligeraient la Sublime Porte de rappeler son Plénipotentiaire, ce qui nous exposerait à mécontenter la majorité qui aurait adopté les idées et les propositions rejetées ou combattues par nous. D'ailleurs, d'après

la tournure que les choses ont prise, la réunion d'une Conférence ne serait en réalité d'aucune utilité.

En effet, l'échange de vues que les Puissances se proposeraient de faire par rapport à la question de paix devra être parfaitement atteint sans qu'on eût recours à une pareille mesure. Les six mois d'armistice, en amenant nécessairement une détente dans la situation, en permettant aux esprits de se calmer dans l'intervalle, laisseraient amplement aux Puissances le temps de s'expliquer, de se renseigner mutuellement, sans que la réunion d'une Conférence vînt fournir un nouvel aliment aux passions et aux ardeurs impatientes. Pendant ce temps, l'œuvre de la réforme intérieure ferait son chemin. L'Europe aurait l'occasion de s'édifier sur le caractère sérieux et pratique des promesses du Gouvernement Impérial. Nous aurions, nos amis auraient avec nous, des faits à opposer à nos détracteurs. Ce sont là des avantages incontestables, des éléments d'une valeur évidente pour la pacification matérielle et morale de l'Orient. Indépendamment de toutes les fins de non-recevoir, de toutes les résistances que nous aurions à opposer à tout projet tendant à nous faire dévier de cette voie, il me semble que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique sera le premier à s'apercevoir qu'il ne serait guère dans l'intérêt général de prendre immédiatement à ce sujet une décision qui enlèverait du coup à la situation tout ce qu'elle présente de favorable à un arrangement satisfaisant pour toutes les parties engagées.

Je serais très-heureux de voir ces réflexions soumises à l'appréciation éclairée de Lord Derby avec toute la force de conviction et toute la connaissance des faits qui caractérisent votre Excellence. J'espère que sa Seigneurie sera d'accord avec nous pour empêcher que la question qui commence à peine à s'éclaircir, grâce à tant de sacrifices et d'efforts, ne soit engagée dans une voie pleine de nouvelles difficultés, de nouveaux périls.

Doc. 180 *Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received October 13.)

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, October 12, 1876, 6:30 P.M.

RUSSIAN Chargé d'Affaires, although speaking as he said without instructions, has expressed himself against a long armistice.

He was reminded that a short time ago his Government had asked for one of three months, upon which he answered that circumstances had changed in the meantime, and he did not believe that his Government would be satisfied with present proposal.

Doc. 181 *Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.**—(Received October 13.)

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, October 12, 1876, 11:15 P.M.

BY an official note Porte declares that, accepting the proposal of the Powers to re-establish peace with Servia and Montenegro on the basis of the *status quo ante bellum*, and being ready to accept the decision of the Powers upon the conditions proposed by it, it does not hesitate to agree to conclusion of a regular armistice. The Porte considers that it should be for six months from the beginning of October, and that it will depend on the mediating Powers to accelerate the suspension of hostilities by appointing as soon as possible their delegates to arrange the armistice on the spot.

Porte will immediately give its military authorities the necessary instructions, and the delegates of the Powers will have to come to an understanding with them and the Commanders of the two Principalities upon the details, and upon the necessity of the points now in possession of the Imperial troops not being re-occupied by the Servians.

Confiding in the equity of the mediating Powers, Porte hopes also that they will take measures to prevent during the armistice the introduction of arms and ammunition and the influx of volunteers to take part in the struggle, the continuation of which must lead to serious complications.

Porte further expresses its conviction that the Powers will make the Principalities understand the necessity of respecting the obligations imposed by the armistice will prevent them from giving encouragement to the insurgents in the neighbouring provinces.

I would point out to your Lordship that the last parts of this communication express the hopes and wishes of Porte, but do not give them as the conditions of its acceptance of the armistice.

* Repeated to Embassies.

Doc. 182

*The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.**

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, October 13, 1876, 4.30 P.M.

FROM conversation yesterday and to-day with Russian Ambassador I fear that his Government is indisposed to accept armistice, but nothing is decided.

Doc. 183

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, October 13, 1876, 4.40 P.M.

WITH reference to your telegram of to-day, you may instruct Mr. Monson to proceed to Vienna, so as to be there at the same time as the Prince, should His Highness carry out his intention of going.

Doc. 184

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Malet.†

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, October 13, 1876, 4.40 P.M.

WITH reference to your telegram of yesterday, ask Italian Government what grounds they have for belief that it will be ruin to Serbia and Montenegro to accept armistice, and urge upon them that the refusal of Italian Government may have disastrous consequences in showing divisions among the Powers, and encouraging the prosecution of the war by Serbia, and the continuance of bloodshed with possible European complications. Her Majesty's Government trust, therefore, that on further consideration Italy will not withhold support to the action taken by England, Germany, Austria, and France.

Doc. 185

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, October 13, 1876, 5.25 P.M.

REPEAT telegram from Sir H. Elliot of October 12, forwarded to you to-day, commencing "By an official note" to Messrs. Monson and White, and instruct former to urge upon Prince of Montenegro that no difficulties should be thrown in the way of a prompt arrangement of the armistice.

Doc. 186

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, October 13, 1876, 5.45 P.M.

I HAVE requested the German Ambassador to press on his Government strongly the importance of the armistice being accepted by Russia. German influence may do much at the present moment. The Russian Government hesitates and seems disposed to refuse.

Refusal will involve serious danger to European peace.

You are desired to speak in the same sense to M. Bülow.

Doc. 187 *Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 13.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Berlin, October 13, 1876.

GERMAN Government have urged acceptance of armistice on Serbia.

Doc. 188

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, October 13, 1876, 6.15 P.M.

AUSTRIAN Ambassador has read to me a telegram from his Government, who accept Turkish proposal of five months' armistice, and will do all in their power to procure

* Repeated to Embassies.

† Repeated to Paris, Berlin, Vienna, St. Petersburg, and Constantinople.

its acceptance by other States. They will also use their best efforts at Belgrade and with Prince of Montenegro, who they think likely to listen to Austrian advice.

Austrian Government cannot determine their course as to Conference without knowing programme. They consider exclusion of Turkish Representative contrary to Treaty of Paris. They hope, therefore, that questions of armistice and Conference may be kept separate, and armistice agreed to without being complicated by considerations as to future negotiations.

Doc. 189

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 512. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, October 13, 1876.

I HAD a conversation to-day with the Russian Ambassador on the subject of the acceptance or rejection by his Government of the armistice proposed by the Porte. His Excellency did not conceal from me his apprehension as to the view that might be taken at Livadia, and expressed himself anxious to do whatever was in his power to remove the objections which appeared to be entertained by his Government.

This conversation being entirely of a confidential and unofficial character, I do not repeat it; but I took the opportunity of impressing, in the strongest manner, on Count Schouvaloff the danger to European peace that would ensue if this armistice was rejected altogether, or if its acceptance were coupled with impossible conditions. I pointed out to his Excellency the change of opinion that had already manifested itself in England since the Russian project of an occupation of Bulgaria became known; and I warned him, that however strong might be the feeling of national indignation against Turkish cruelties, it would be superseded by a very different sentiment if it were once believed by the English nation that Constantinople was threatened. Rightly or wrongly, I said, the conclusion to which every one here would come would be, that the rejection by Russia of the Turkish proposal indicated a fixed purpose of going to war; and I entreated him to omit no effort to make his Government understand the light in which this resolution would be viewed by the English people.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 190

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.

(No. 651.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, October 13, 1876.

I HAVE requested Count Münster to press strongly on the German Government the importance of the acceptance by Russia of the armistice; and I have pointed out to him that the influence of Germany may be most useful at the present moment, when the Russian Government, by its hesitation and apparent disposition to refuse the armistice, is preparing serious complications, as the refusal could not fail to involve serious danger to the peace of Europe.

It is my wish that your Excellency should speak in the same sense to Herr von Bülow.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 191

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 432.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 13, 1876.

THE Austrian Ambassador called upon me this afternoon and read to me a telegram from Count Andrassy stating that the Austrian Government have decided to accept the Turkish proposal of a five months' armistice, and to do all in their power to procure its acceptance by other States.

Count Andrassy adds that he will use his best efforts for this purpose at Belgrade, though Austrian influence is not predominant there; and that he will make similar representations to the Prince of Montenegro, who, he thinks, is likely to listen to the advice of Austria.

As regards the question of a Conference the Austrian Government state that they cannot determine their course without knowing what the programme of its deliberations is to be.

They think that the exclusion of a Turkish Representative would be contrary to the provisions of the Treaty of Paris of 1856. They hope therefore that the two questions of armistice and Conference will be kept separate, and that the armistice will be agreed to without being complicated by considerations as to the course or form of the subsequent negotiations.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 192 *Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received October 14.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, October 13, 1876, 10 P.M.

THE subjoined figures have been sent to Monson :—

“ I have forwarded to Lord Derby your telegram respecting difficulty of inducing Prince of Montenegro to consent to the armistice, but you may safely support Austrian Agent if he is instructed to advocate its acceptance, as Lord Derby has on the Russian and Austrian Governments, Serbia being induced to do so.

“ Prince Nicholas cannot advance his interests better than by complying with the wishes of Austria and England on the subject.

“ A telegram just received from Lord Derby informs me that the German Government have urged acceptance of armistice on Serbia.”

Doc. 193

Prince Gortchakow to Count Schouvaloff.

(Télégraphique.)

Livadia, le 14 Octobre, 1876.

NE croyons pas armistice de six mois nécessaire ou favorable à conclusion d'une paix durable que désirons. Ne saurions exercer pression sur Serbie et Monténégro pour les faire consentir à incertitude aussi prolongée de leur situation difficile; enfin trouvons que position financière et commerciale de toute l'Europe déjà intolérable, souffrirait encore de ce délai. Devons insister sur armistice d'un mois à six semaines, proposition primitive de l'Angleterre, sauf à le prolonger si la marche des négociations en démontre la nécessité.

Doc. 194

Lord Tenterden to the Hon. J. C. Vivian.

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 14, 1876.

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to request that you will state to Mr. Secretary Hardy that a telegraphic despatch has been received from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, reporting that it may be necessary that foreign Military Delegates should be sent without loss of time to the Turkish, Servian, and Montenegrin armies to concert with the several Commanders the terms of the armistice proposed by the Porte.

Lord Derby has stated to the Representatives of Her Majesty at the Courts of the Powers that Her Majesty's Government will be prepared to send Military Delegates, and I am accordingly to suggest that Major-General Sir A. Kemball should be named to act at the Turkish, and Major Gonne at the Servian, head-quarters, and to inquire whether Mr. Hardy concurs in this arrangement, and will be good enough to inform Lord Derby of the officer whom he would recommend should be sent to Montenegro.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

Doc. 195 *Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received October 14.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Most Confidential.)

Vienna, October 14, 1876, 2 P.M.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 688 of the 5th instant, the Turkish Ambassador tells me, in strict confidence, that it has been in consequence of Count Andrassy's

advice sent through him to Grand Vizier, that the clause respecting entrance of Russians into Servia has been included among proposals of Porte attached to the communication accepting the armistice.

Doc. 196 Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 15.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.)

Berlin, October 15, 1876.

M. DE BULOW'S private opinion is that Russia wants to get the armistice reduced to two months, with power of prolongation, if necessary, by the Guaranteeing Governments.

Italy supports Russia with hopes of territorial compensation in the future. M. Nigra is suspected of having spoken in this sense at St. Petersburg.

Doc. 197 Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 15.)

(Telegraphic.)

Scutari, October 15, 1876, 9:20 A.M.

BATTLE was fought yesterday at Mosels, close to Spuz. Turks claim to have taken the enemy's positions.

Doc. 198 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 15.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, October 15, 1876, 11:50 A.M.

WITH reference to my telegram of yesterday, I have addressed the following letter to the Minister for Foreign Affairs:—

“Dear Count Andrassy,

“As Baron Orczy seemed yesterday to have some doubt as to the decision of Her Majesty's Government respecting expediency of accepting the Turkish proposal of an armistice for six months, I think it right to lose no time in confirming what I then said to his Excellency on the subject, by informing you that the English Chargé d'Affaires at Rome was yesterday instructed to state to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, in reply to a suggestion of his Excellency, that Her Majesty's Government are unable to see any reason for reducing the armistice to two months, and have already joined other Powers in accepting the Turkish proposal.

“I should like to have some conversation with you on the subject, if you could receive me in the course of the day.”

Doc. 199 Mr. Monson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 16.)

(No. 178. Political.)

My Lord,

Cettigné, October 4, 1876.

HAVING heard before the audience which Prince Nicholas accorded me yesterday that His Highness had inquired whether I had any letter to present to him; and that M. Yonine was trying to make use of the fact that I had none to weaken the impression which my arrival had made upon the Prince; I took occasion to say to His Highness that I had no written instructions from your Lordship, but had left Ragusa immediately upon the receipt of telegraphic orders to proceed to Cettigné. His Highness observed in reply that he knew that I had no letter to him, but that he hoped that Her Majesty's Government would, before long, decide to send one.

M. Ceccaldi, the French Agent, who is Consul at Scutari, informs me that when he was appointed to that post in 1872 he received from M. de Rémusat a letter accrediting him to the Prince, in which all mention of Turkey was scrupulously avoided.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

Doc. 200 *Mr. Monson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 16.)*

(No. 179. Political. Most Confidential.)

My Lord,

Cettigné, October 4, 1876.

WITH reference to that passage in my despatch No. 177 of this day's date in which I have reported Prince Nicholas' language respecting the Czar, I have the honour to state that His Highness added, with marked emphasis, that although he entertained these sentiments of esteem and gratitude towards His Imperial Majesty and his family, he had by no means the same affection for Russians in general, but something very much the contrary.

The fact is that M. Yonine and his compatriots have behaved towards the Prince with such arrogance, and have assumed such airs of independence and of dictatorial consequence that they have greatly destroyed the influence which they might have had, and have succeeded in alienating the gratitude which the services of their surgeons and their ambulances might have won for them.

The Prince read me last night a letter which he had just received from the Empress of Russia respecting his three elder daughters, who are being educated at St. Petersburg, which contained a very timely allusion to the desirability of peace.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

Doc. 201 *Mr. Monson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 16.)*

(No. 180. Political.)

My Lord,

Cettigné, October 4, 1876.

HAVING no opportunity of doing so last night, Prince Nicholas was so good as to show me this morning on the map the rectifications of frontier which he desires.

They are very much the same as I have recently reported to your Lordship, and are roughly as follows: the district of Nischich, and that of Spuz, which resemble two weapons planted north and south in Montenegrin territory; those districts on the northern frontier the inhabitants of which owe nominal allegiance to the Porte, but are really subjects of Montenegro, applying to the Prince in all their contentions, and accepting his decisions as legal—such districts, namely, as the Banjani, Kolaschin, and the Sutorina,—the Kuci tribe on the south-east, who have made common cause with Montenegro, should also become his subjects; the plain lying west of the Moratcha as far as the debouchure of the river into Lake Scutari, and the Sutorman district with the harbour of Spitzza, are the chief accessions which His Highness desires on the east and south.

Altogether the number of his subjects would be increased by some five or six thousand, nearly all of whom profess the Orthodox faith, and many of whom have long been practically independent of the Porte.

The Prince spoke very earnestly to me about the port of Spitzza. He said that, if England would procure him that concession, Montenegro would be eternally grateful. He wanted free access to the sea, that he might be able to import foreign goods direct, instead of through Austria or Turkey. He had metalliferous mountains which he wanted to work; rich ores of manganese and antimony, of which at present no advantage can be taken. He wanted liberty of communication with the outer world.

The commerce of the Principality could never be great, but surely England would encourage his efforts in this direction.

As for Spitzza becoming a Russian port, let any one look at the map and be convinced that such a mite of a place could never become dangerous in that way.

Austria would of course be indisposed to help him to a seaport, preferring that he should be dependant upon Cattaro, and might propose, instead of Spitzza, the free navigation of the Scutari Lake and the River Bojana; but in the first place the Bojana was not yet really navigable, and would require expensive works to make it so, which the Turks might never undertake; and in the second place he would be dependent on the caprice of the Pasha at Scutari, and he had experience enough to know what a mockery the concession of free navigation would be, when a Turkish official had always the power to stop it.

I daresay that the Prince hardly expects to get all that he asks; but if the Sultan could be induced to look upon these cessions as an act of generosity to a petty Principality, if the Porte would surrender some of the ninety-seven (!) fortified places by which she

has hemmed in Montenegro (many of these being planted within easy gunshot of Montenegrin soil), and would recognise that these forts have been, not only an expense, but a weakness, useful neither for offensive nor for defensive purposes, and acting simply as an irritant to the mountaineers; if, in fact, Turkey would make the experiment of conciliation, it seems to me that she could lose but little of value, and would probably gain much in the present friendship of Montenegro and the future tranquillity of the Herzegovina.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

Doc. 202 Mr. Monson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 16.)

(No. 182. Political.)

My Lord,

Cettigné, October 5, 1876.

PRINCE NICHOLAS is very anxious to show, by every means in his power, that he knows how to carry on the war with courtesy towards the enemy.

The Grand Vizier having requested permission to send provisions into Medun during the late truce, His Highness replied that he would do that himself, on condition that he might be allowed to verify the number of the garrison, although he knew that the fortress was reduced to such straits that it must soon surrender from famine.

Again, Osman Pasha, who was taken prisoner at Vrbitz, having told Mr. Stillman that his health was affected by the monotony of his life at Cettigné, the Prince at once acceded to Mr. Stillman's proposition that he should allow the Pasha three weeks absence to go to Ragusa for change of air; and the Pasha is there now, having been supplied by the Prince with a sum of money far more than enough to pay his expenses handsomely.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

Doc. 203 Mr. Monson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 16.)

(No 183. Political. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Cettigné, October 5, 1876.

COLONEL THÖMMEL, the Austrian Military Agent, and M. Ceccaldi, the Representative of France, have been taking advantage of the Prince's extreme irritation at the course of events in Servia to press upon His Highness the expediency of concluding a separate armistice, and of severing his action altogether from that of Servia.

I believe that His Highness would do so at once but for two reasons: first, that he receives from Servia at the beginning of each month a small sum towards the expenses of the war; and, secondly, that, although he considers himself morally absolved by Servia's misconduct from the obligations of the Convention between the two Principalities, he does not like to appear to desert his hitherto unsuccessful ally.

M. Yonine, of course, works upon His Highness in the sense of preserving the alliance; and I really believe that he would rather see Montenegro suffer a reverse than that she should throw herself upon the generosity of the Porte and the goodwill of the Great Powers.

I have been very cautious in my language to the Prince, as I do not know how far the combinations of Her Majesty's Government, and the proposals for a general peace, might be prejudiced by any separate action here; although I can hardly imagine that there can be any reason for hesitating to co-operate in detaching Montenegro from Servia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

Doc. 204

Mr. Monson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 16.)

(No. 184. Political.)

My Lord,

Cettigné, October 6, 1876.

COLONEL THÖMMEL received in the course of last night two telegrams from Count Andrassy respecting the desire of the Porte for a continuance of the truce; and was in conference with the Prince for some hours.

His Highness at first agreed to send provisions every three days into Medun; and despatched a courier at once with orders to supply the first instalment to-day. Early this morning, however, he received a report that the troops were discontented at his previous generosity; and in particular the Kutchi, in whose district Medun is situated, protested that their alliance and services merited such a recognition as the capture of the fortress. The Prince thereupon decided that he would do no more than provision the fort till the 8th instant, and after that it must take its chance. He also requested Colonel Thömmel to explain to Count Andrassy that he was being hard pressed by many of his chiefs to resume the offensive against Moukhtar Pasha; and that therefore he earnestly begged the Great Powers to bring about a definite armistice at once.

Colonel Thömmel came to me upon leaving the Prince, and I agreed to telegraph to your Lordship in the same sense as he was going to do to Count Andrassy. M. Ceccaldi will address a similar telegram to the Duc Decazes.

The Prince has given provisional orders to his chiefs to remain on the defensive.

Moukhtar Pasha has been reinforced by six hundred Arnauts, five guns, and the greater part of the garrison at Trebigné. Five Montenegrin battalions have crossed the Tscherbinitza, and threaten his communications in the rear.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

Doc. 205 *Consul-General Stanley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 16.)*

(No. 13. Political. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Odessa, October 5, 1876.

I THINK it my duty to report that Mr. Acting Vice-Consul Carroll informs me from Poti, in a private letter dated 29th September, that 150,000 Russian troops are now ready near the Turco-Russian frontier for immediate action, the greater part of them being at Alexandropol.

There are no extraordinary movements to report here. It is, I believe, quite untrue, as stated in some newspapers, that there is a large Russian force in Bessarabia.

I have every reason to think the number does not exceed 15,000. I witnessed, a few days ago, a review of 10,000 troops, artillery, infantry, regular cavalry (Lancers) and Cossacks. This is about the number usually reviewed here at this time of the year.

Orders have been received to mount guns on the fort in construction at Ochakof within a month—it was not intended to have mounted them for upwards of a year. Torpedoes, of which fifteen have arrived, are to be laid down in Odessa Bay, and small works to be erected on shore for their protection.

The cargo already shipped on two of the largest steamers of the Russian Steam Navigation Company was taken out, the ostensible reason being that repairs were required. The belief is they were detained by order of the Government.

They have been permitted to go to their destinations, Marseilles and London.

Large bodies of volunteers continue to leave for Servia, and are blessed at the station by the "White Priests."

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. E. STANLEY.

Doc. 206 Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 16.)

(No. 173. Political.)

My Lord,

Belgrade, October 6, 1876.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship the two accompanying copies of telegrams addressed by General Chernayeff to the Servian Government on the subject of the mutilation of Servian wounded by Turkish troops, which I am about to report to your Lordship by telegraph (No. 174, Political.)

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Doc. 207

Inclosure in Doc. 206.

Report of General Chernayeff to M. Ristitch.

Déligrade, le 3 Octobre, 1876.

VOUS ayant communiqué, dans le courant du mois dernier, que les prisonniers qu'il est arrivé à l'ennemi de faire et les blessés qui tombent entre ses mains sont condamnés aux plus atroces supplices avant d'être mis à mort, je crois devoir vous informer que le 20 Septembre au soir nos troupes, après avoir repris à l'ennemi une position abandonnée la veille, trouvèrent des corps de nos prisonniers blessés dans un état tel que l'esprit humain se refuse à la croire possible. Les malheureux se trouvaient attachés à la terre par des chevilles de bois, les mains étendues, les pieds et d'autres parties du corps calcinés, les doigts de pied coupés, le bas-ventre mutilé au couteau, la figure contractée par les souffrances. La présence de cadavres des soldats nizams prouve que ces atrocités sont l'œuvre de troupes régulières.

La vérité de ce fait hideux est attestée par la parole d'honneur d'officiers, du Colonel de Preradovitch, du Capitaine Tikchanoff et d'autres témoins. Je vous prie de bien vouloir faire constater ce fait par des personnes qui jouissent de toute confiance de MM. les Agents Diplomatiques en Serbie. Nos troupes irréprochables jusqu'ici sont tellement outrées des cruautés de l'ennemi que je crains à l'avenir de ne pas pouvoir les empêcher de commettre par droit de représailles les mêmes cruautés.

Doc. 208

Inclosure in Doc. 206.

Report of General Chernayeff to M. Ristitch.

Déligrade, le 4 Octobre, 1876.

DANS ma dépêche d'hier je vous ai informé des cruautés que les Turcs commettent sur ceux de nos blessés qu'ils font prisonniers. Aujourd'hui j'ai reçu un rapport du Lieutenant-Colonel Popovitch, Commandant de la position d'Alexinatz, dans lequel il me fait part qu'on a trouvé devant cette position sur la rive gauche de la Morava, à proximité du village de Bonimir des blessés Serbes cloués à la terre, mutilés, avec les membres coupés et brûlés.

Je m'empresse de vous en informer comme un exemple de plus de la barbarie Turque.

Doc. 209 Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 16.)

(No. 440. Secret.)

My Lord,

Berlin, October 10, 1876.

HERR VON BULOW told me to-day that Prince Bismarck had been surprised to hear from Constantinople and from Rome that your Lordship had instructed Sir Henry Elliot to leave Constantinople if the Porte persisted in refusing an armistice. His Highness was anxious to know what truth there was in this report, so as to frame his policy accordingly. He believed the Russian Government to be favourable to such a measure; but he could not well believe that Her Majesty's Government would take so serious a step without communicating their intention to the Guaranteeing Powers, with whom they were acting in concert.

I did not feel at liberty to admit to Herr von Bülow that I was in possession of your Lordship's telegraphic instruction to Sir Henry Elliot of the 5th instant, which your Lordship distinctly tells me "not to communicate to the Government to which I am accredited," so I reminded his Excellency that I had some days since informed him that Sir H. Elliot had been instructed to use all the means in his power to prevail upon the Porte to grant an armistice, and I therefore thought it quite possible that Her Majesty's Ambassador might have endeavoured to overcome the obstinacy of the Turkish Government by pointing out the various and many serious consequences their resistance to the well-meant advice of the Powers might expose them to. I had myself in former years seen my respected Chief, Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, resort to similar threats with never-failing success, and if Sir Henry Elliot had hinted at a possible rupture of relations, the measure would certainly not be resorted to without previous reference to Her Majesty's Government, and consultation with the Guaranteeing Powers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 210 Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 16.)

(No. 441. Secret.)

My Lord,

Berlin, October 11, 1876.

I AM obliged to your Lordship for the telegraphic permission received to-day to communicate confidentially to the German Government your Lordship's telegram of the 5th instant to Sir Henry Elliot, authorizing his Excellency to state to the Porte that he would leave Constantinople if the armistice were refused. Herr von Bülow was evidently gratified at my confidential communication, and thanked me for it very cordially, for his Excellency had shared the surprise felt by Prince Bismarck, and reported in my despatch No. 440, Secret, of the 10th instant, at so important an instruction of Her Majesty's Government having been made known to the German Government from Constantinople and Rome, and not in the first instance direct from London.

Prince Bismarck namely holds that after the repeated offers he has made since last January to support the policy of England in Turkey he has acquired the privilege of being kept informed of the measures Her Majesty's Government wish him to support, and since he had found out from Constantinople and Rome, and, as I have since learnt, also from Livadia, the secret instructions sent to Sir Henry Elliot on the 5th instant, I was glad your Lordship enabled me, by a prompt communication of the exact truth, to remove any Germanic susceptibility or touchiness His Serene Highness may have given way to at the discovery.

It is also possible that Prince Bismarck has not yet shaken off the impressions of the Manteuffel Mission, reported in my despatch No. 432, Secret, of the 7th instant, and that he thinks or fears that England and Russia are growing too intimate to suit the future interests of Germany.

Until he returns to Berlin, and I speak to him myself, I cannot well judge of his state of mind in regard to pending questions.

As far as I can learn, however, he approves of the armistice, but dislikes the prospect of a Conference, the objections to which he shares with Count Andrassy.

Your Lordship will recollect that Prince Bismarck's earnest hope and wish was that Her Majesty's Government would be able to back up Count Andrassy's policy, believing the interests of England and Austria to be identical in Turkey, and that he would then be able to add the moral support of Germany to the combined advice of the two Powers most interested in the maintenance of an improved *status quo* in the Ottoman Empire, thereby keeping the national aspirations of Russia under control.

Events did not realize Prince Bismarck's hopes or calculations, and he now has to deal with an altered state of things. National influences have come into play; England and Russia are acting in concert at Constantinople; while Austria is drifting into a conflict at home between Magyar particularism and her general Imperial interests.

Prince Bismarck no longer sees his way to the support of Austria and the control of Russia through England, he holds his own and bides his time, and hopes for another change less favourable to Russia than the present constellation of affairs.

He also reckoned on a strong expression of public sympathy for Austria in opposition to Russia in the German press, which might have a certain influence on his Imperial master's mind. But it has not yet come, and on the whole he must perceive that public opinion in Germany has hitherto been less Hungarian and more Russian than he expected.

Indeed there is in Germany far more sympathy for the cause Russia has taken up in Turkey than for the maintenance of the Ottoman Empire in Europe, and I see that Sir Andrew Buchanan, in one of his recent Confidential telegrams, says that the Members of the German Embassy in Vienna openly express these sentiments.

Public opinion may, however, undergo further changes under the influence of the coming events.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 211 Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 16.)
(No. 442.)

My Lord,

Berlin, October 13, 1876.

I COMMUNICATED your Lordship's telegram of the 11th instant to Herr von Bülow respecting the importance of inducing Servia to accept the armistice, and his Excellency told me in reply that instructions had already been sent to the German Consul-General, Count Bray, to speak in the same sense as Her Majesty's Consul-General, Mr. White, to the Servian Government.

His Excellency said that the conditions of the armistice were not yet known, but that there was reason to fear that the proposed period of its duration might be objected to at Vienna and in Russia. The German Government had no wish to raise objections or to add to existing difficulties, and would, therefore, reserve their opinion until they were in possession of the views of the Guaranteeing Powers.

Regarding the proposed Conference, his Excellency said that Prince Bismarck agreed with your Lordship in thinking that it should not be entered into before its object had been clearly defined and accepted by the parties concerned.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 212 Sir C. Wyke to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 16.)

(Telegraphic.)

Copenhagen, October 16, 1876.

I AM assured at the Foreign Office here that the late proposal of the Russian Government to that of Austria for the joint military occupation of Bulgaria and Herzegovina was strongly supported by Prince Bismarck's Agent at Vienna, and they have every reason to suppose that the same support will have to be given to Russian projects there.

I report this fact on the chance that your Lordship may not be acquainted with it.

Doc. 213

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Malet.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, October 16, 1876, 2:30 P.M.

EXPRESS satisfaction at attention paid to representations of Her Majesty's Government, and trust Italian Government will continue to urge upon Servia and Montenegro not to oppose proposals made in the interest of peace.

Doc. 214

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, October 16, 1876, 3 P.M.

INSTRUCTION to Sir H. Elliot of 5th instant was not communicated to any Power by Her Majesty's Government except to Germany, and intelligence of it must have reached Livadia and Rome from Constantinople after Sir H. Elliot had acted on it.

As there seems some confusion about the threatened withdrawal from Constantinople of Sir H. Elliot in the event of a refusal by the Porte to grant an armistice, it may be well to explain that no rupture of relations was contemplated.

It was thought better in that event that Sir H. Elliot should retire for a time, and take no part in the negotiation, but the Secretary of Embassy would have remained. The

step was intended to show displeasure on the part of England, but it would not have been a diplomatic rupture.

Her Majesty's Government are most anxious to act with the Government of Germany, and in the present situation of affairs that Government could do much in the interest of peace if Germany would exert its influence to procure Russian acceptance of the armistice. I should be glad to know, since Prince Bismarck seems to object to a Conference, what other plan for procuring an agreement among the Powers he would consider favourable.

Doc. 215 Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 16.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Belgrade, October 16, 1876, 3 P.M.

EMPEROR ALEXANDER has telegraphed that his Consul should not take any steps with a view to armistice here until Porte agrees to original proposal of one for six weeks.

All my colleagues agree with me that an attempt to recommend acceptance by Prince Milan would be perfectly useless, and that the Agent doing this would only weaken his influence and place himself at a disadvantage.

I shall, therefore, preserve great reserve, and abstain from isolated action.

Doc. 216

*The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.**

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, October 16, 1876, 8.30 P.M.

COUNT SCHOUVALOFF has communicated to me a telegram from Prince Gortchakow, dated Livadia, October 14, of which the following is a translation:—

"We do not think an armistice of six months necessary or favourable to the conclusion of a durable peace, which we desire. We cannot exercise pressure on Servia or Montenegro to make them consent to the uncertainty of their difficult situation being so prolonged. Lastly, we consider that the financial and commercial position of all Europe, already intolerable, would suffer still more from this delay. We must insist ('devons insister') on an armistice of a month or six weeks, the original proposal of England, subject to its being prolonged if the progress of negotiations shows it to be necessary."

I told Count Schouvaloff that I had received this communication with regret, and pointed out to him that the proposal of Her Majesty's Government was for an armistice of "not less than a month."

Doc. 217

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, October 16, 1876.

WITH reference to your telegram of the 14th instant, you may tell Count Andrassy that Her Majesty's Government accepted the Turkish proposal of a five months' armistice, and expressed hopes that it would be generally accepted by the other Powers.

You will have seen from my telegram of the 13th instant that Count Beust read to me a telegram from Count Andrassy stating his explicit acceptance of the five months' armistice.

Doc. 218

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, October 16, 1876.

IN reply to your telegram of the 13th, you may tell Count Andrassy that Count Schouvaloff made no such personal suggestion as you mention respecting Russia reserving liberty of intervention, though something was said by him on the subject in the course of conversation.

You may also inform him of my language to Count Schouvaloff, as stated in my telegram to Lord A. Loftus of the 14th instant.

Doc. 219 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 17.)
(No. 701.)

My Lord,

Vienna, October 11, 1876.

I HAVE the honour to transmit, herewith, to your Lordship, the inclosed despatch, which has been addressed to me by Major Gonne, Military Attaché to this Embassy.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Doc. 220

Inclosure in Doc. 219.

Major Gonne to Sir A. Buchanan.

Sir,

Vienna, October 11, 1876.

A NEWSPAPER report, probably devoid of any foundation of fact, and distinctly contradicted by those who must be well informed, is the cause of my calling the attention of your Excellency to the weakness of Austria as an ally, should the Eastern question terminate in an European war. It is reported that overtures have been made by Russia to Italy, encouraging that country to stretch its boundary over the Trentino, in the event of Austria thwarting Russian designs against Turkey. The temptation to a country circumstanced as Italy would be so great, that I think the mere rumour worthy of attention.*

Italy is on the eve of an election. Ever since 1866 diplomatic negotiations touching the Italian-speaking portion of the Tyrol have been carried on. The strength of the Italian Army is out of all proportion to its need as a defensive force, and as Nice was ceded by Treaty, the Tyrol alone offers a field for expansion. The Italians abstained from taking action against their benefactors in the moment of adversity but would owe the Austrians no debt of gratitude if an opportunity offered to regain territory once under the Venetian Republic.

Undoubtedly a stronger Italian party exists in the Tyrol than in Dalmatia, where the Italians are formidable though not numerous. And in the event of Austria engaging in any enterprise hostile to Slav interests, an Italian army of invasion might indulge reasonable expectation of sympathy in both these Provinces.

I should say from the little information I possess that the Italian army is desirous of proving to the world that she has made improvement since 1859. The extent of that improvement I am unable to report, but no country has thrown her heart and soul more thoroughly into the study and, as far as possible, practice of military art.

The question whether the Slavs of Austria would fight against what they may consider Slav interests is very serious.

The Magyars, by a total want of tact and *suaviter in modo*, have made the burden of a 55 per cent. taxation a dead weight on the inhabitants of Croatia and Slavonia, without mitigating influences such as tangible national advantages. The feeling of the Slav against the Magyar is of the bitterest. As regards Dalmatia and Bohemia, where the inhabitants are not so heavily taxed, the feeling, though unsatisfactory, is not to be called bitter.† The Slav calls for home rule without being able to find serious fault with the principle of Government.

If Russia makes war, it will be as the deadly enemy of the Turk and the Slav champion. The question I am obliged to raise is, how many of the 800,000 men constituting the armed strength of Austria would object to fight against Slav interests? How many others would be required to maintain order in the Slav Provinces? And would the remnant suffice to protect her frontier? I am pre-supposing that neither Germans nor Poles will cause complications.‡

To answer these questions one can only speculate on probabilities, but my impression is that without a hostile attitude on the side of Italy—in case of a war with Russia—Austria must fight a defensive campaign, and can afford little or no help to an ally in want of battalions.

The state of Austrian finance may at first sight appear as healthy, or rather as little healthy, as that of Russia, but Austria has no hoarded wealth. The Slavs of Russia, on the other hand, produce large sums of money in furtherance of an idea.

Austria will do well to avoid war either single-handed or as an ally.

I have, &c.

(Signed) M. S. GONNE, Major, 17th Lancers.

* It is said the report is an electioneering trick.

† The Slav feeling of discontent is kept alive mainly by the clericals.

‡ Any discontent in Poland is due to the clericals.

Doc. 221 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 17.)
(No. 712.)

My Lord,

Vienna, October 14, 1876.

IN forwarding herewith a despatch for your Lordship from Mr. Consul Holmes, which I have received under flying seal, respecting the statements of Canon Liddon and the Rev. Mr. Macoll of atrocities which had come to their knowledge on the frontier of Bosnia, I have the honour to add that Sir H. Elliot's attention was called to the subject by myself. When I did so, however, I was not aware, as I have since learnt from publications in the "Times," that these gentlemen had obtained their information when passengers in a steam-vessel on the Save, and that they had not travelled along the frontier as I led Sir Henry Elliot to believe.

I avail myself of this opportunity also to mention that I have spoken on the subject to Count Andrassy, who assures me that no atrocities of the kind alleged could have been perpetrated on the frontier of Bosnia without its being known to the Austrian authorities and reported to himself.

The whole story, therefore, probably resolves itself, as suggested by Mr. Holmes, to heads or even bodies exposed on poles, as I have myself seen men hanging in chains during the British Protectorate in the Island of Corfu.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Doc. 222 Consul Holmes to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 17.)
(No. 48.)

My Lord,

Bosna Seraï, October 5, 1876.

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a despatch addressed to Sir Henry Elliot in answer to a request for information regarding a statement made by Canon Liddon that he had seen examples of revolting cruelty perpetrated by Turkish officers of the regular army, who had impaled men and women at all the military stations along the frontier.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. R. HOLMES.

Doc. 223

Inclosure in Doc. 222.

Consul Holmes to Sir H. Elliot.

Sir,

Bosna Seraï, October 5, 1876.

WITH regard to the astounding statement made to your Excellency by Canon Liddon and his friend, I have to report that neither the Turkish authorities, the Consuls, nor the people here have ever heard of anything resembling the cruelties mentioned. No statement of the kind has either appeared in any of the Slave newspapers most hostile to Turkey, and it is quite impossible to imagine that they could have occurred without immediately becoming publicly known.

Mr. Stuart Glennie arrived here a week ago from Servia, having been at Alexinatz and Deligrad, and also along the Turkish frontier of the Drina from the Save to Sbornik, and neither in Servia nor in Turkey did he hear a word of any impalements; and was moreover rather favourably impressed than otherwise by all he saw and heard of the behaviour of both the Bashi-Bazouks and the regular troops along the Drina frontier.

Further up the Drina towards Vishegrad and Novi Bazar, the troops are commanded by an European officer, Mehmet Ali Pasha, who cannot possibly be supposed to permit such cruelties.

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Doc. 224 Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 17.)

(No. 877. Very Confidential.)

My Lord,

Paris, October 16, 1876.

THE Duc Decazes told me this morning that he did not at all believe the newspaper stories that a formal Treaty had been concluded between Italy and Russia providing that Italy should be aggrandized at the expense of Austria as a recompense for supporting

Russian views in Turkey. He added that he did not even suppose that any verbal understanding of this nature had been come to between the two Powers. He did think, however, that the Italian imagination had been excited by the prospect of an accession of territory, and he looked upon the recent conduct of the Italian Government as intended to convey to Russia a hint that Italy is open to an offer.

It was at all events, the Duke conceived, indisputable that Signor Melegari's objections to the armistice of six months, and his proposal that it should be reduced to one of two months, were made at the instigation of Russia. He had been confirmed in this conviction by a comparison of dates. The Russian Ambassador here had communicated to him a telegram in cypher from Prince Gortchakow objecting to the six months' armistice. On the next day but one the Russian telegram *en clair* stating the same objections had arrived. It was on the intermediate day that Signor Melegari put forward objections exactly in the sense of Prince Gortchakow's first telegram.

The French public see the finger of Prince Bismarck in everything that occurs. Their impression is that Italy would not have gone even so far as they suppose her to have gone already if she had not made herself sure of German as well as Russian support.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

Doc. 225 *Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received October 17.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Very Confidential.)

Berlin, October 17, 1876.

M. DE BULOW has just told me that, in the absence of any news from Baden and from Varzin, he is not in a position to say whether the German Government will support England and Austria or Russia in the armistice question. His Excellency has given a similar reply to my colleagues.

General Schweinitz is expected to-morrow from Baden.

The impression of persons in office and at Court is that the German Emperor will do nothing in opposition to the Czar's wishes at present.

Doc. 226

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 526.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, October 17, 1876.

THE Russian Ambassador, in a conversation which he held with me this day, spoke with anxiety of the situation, which he described as unsatisfactory and even dangerous. The Emperor of Russia, he said, had decided some time ago that having regard to the feeling of his own people, and to the agitation that prevailed among them, he could not longer allow the continuance of war between Servia and Turkey. With the view of putting an end to it he had engaged in negotiations for an armistice; and the armistice proposed by the Porte being inadmissible, it was difficult to see what expedient remained. Either a new arrangement must be made in the nature of a compromise between the Russian and the Turkish proposals, or Russia would be thrown back on her original proposition of an occupation of Turkish territory.

I said that it was unnecessary to warn his Excellency as to the danger of a general disturbance of European peace which was involved in any such scheme of occupation, however limited it might be both as to area and as to time.

Count Schouvaloff then added as a personal suggestion that as it could not be easy for either the Russian or the English Government, both of which had already expressed decided opinions on the matter in dispute, to offer a new suggestion to the Porte, it might be well if some other Government, hitherto unpledged, like that of Germany or of Austria, should undertake to come forward with a plan which both might accept as a compromise. I said, in reply, that I saw no objection in principle to the course which he suggested, though I must, of course, reserve my opinion till I knew whether any such interposition was likely to take place, and in what sense. I told Count Schouvaloff that I had already taken steps to ascertain, more accurately than I know it at present, the opinion of the German Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 227
(No. 659.)
My Lord,

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.

Foreign Office, October 17, 1876.

IT is of great importance, at the present crisis, that Her Majesty's Government should have the clearest possible understanding of the attitude taken by each of the Powers with regard to the successive phases of the pending negotiations with the Porte. With respect to the attitude of Prince Bismarck as regards the acceptance of the Turkish proposal for an armistice of five months, there has been some confusion which your Excellency will probably be able to explain.

On the 11th instant you were informed by telegraph that Sir Henry Elliot had reported on the 10th that this proposal had been made by the Porte.

On the 13th instant you telegraphed that the acceptance of the armistice had been urged on Servia by the German Government. On the receipt of this information Her Majesty's Government informed the Powers that Germany, as well as France and Austria, had accepted the armistice. They had no doubt that the acceptance was absolute; but it appears from your despatch No. 442 of the 13th instant, that, though instructions had been sent to the German Consul-General at Belgrade to speak to the Servian Government in the same sense as His Majesty's Consul-General, Herr von Bülow had said that, considering the possible objections of Austria and Russia, the German Government would reserve their opinion until they should have received more detailed reports from Constantinople and knew the views of the Guaranteeing Powers. It would seem from these remarks of Herr von Bülow that Her Majesty's Government were mistaken in supposing that the armistice had been accepted by Germany but, as it is important that there should be no misapprehension on the point, I should wish to know whether your telegram of the 13th was founded on a conversation in which no mention had been made of the reservation of the decision of Germany, or whether there were special reasons for delaying the information as to the hesitation of the Imperial Government when you telegraphed that the instructions to urge the acceptance of the armistice had been sent to the German Agent at Belgrade.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 228 *Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.**—(Received October 17, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

St. Petersburg, October 17, 1876, 3 P.M.

RUSSIAN press is violent and unanimous against the acceptance of the proposed Turkish armistice. There is much fanatical excitement and a general feeling for war throughout the country.

Position of the Emperor and Government very embarrassing, and without a compromise on the armistice question they may be forced by public opinion into action.

In order to maintain European concert, essential to the general peace, an armistice until the end of the year might be acceptable to all parties, and thus avert a Russian occupation of Turkish territory, which otherwise appears imminent. This period ought to suffice to prove the sincerity and efficacy of peace negotiations.

Doc. 229

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 17, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, October 17, 1876, 3.30 P.M.

FROM Montenegro to-day:—

"Prince Nicholas charges me to state to Her Majesty's Government that he, for his part, accepts the armistice, and will give his formal answer as soon as he receives from Belgrade (the?) reply which he is expecting. But His Highness cannot consent to a longer term than two months, and that because all the advantages of a long armistice would be on the side of the Porte. He says that he knows that the Servian (Government?) have come to the same conclusion.

* Repeated to Embassies.

"I fear that it will be impossible to alter this resolution, as from military point of view His Highness' arguments are sound.

"I am assured, on excellent authority, that Russia will make the refusal of a shorter armistice a *casus belli*."

Doc. 230

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 17, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, October 17, 1876, 4.40 P.M.

I HAVE had a conversation with Count Andrassy since receiving your Lordship's telegrams of yesterday when I acquainted him with your answer to Prince Gortchakow's proposal of an armistice of six weeks as the original proposal of England.

He says he has received to-day a telegram from Count Beust reporting that Count Schouvaloff had telegraphed to Livadia that Her Majesty's Government consider themselves engaged by acceptance of Turkish proposal; but Count Schouvaloff presumed that, if a Power accepted the five months with conditions that in the event of the Porte refusing its assent to decisions of the Conference, the armistice would terminate *ipso facto*, such an expedient would be accepted.

Count Andrassy said he did not understand whether Count Schouvaloff had done this with your Lordship's sanction; but, however that may be, he said that if Her Majesty's Government assents to such a proposal he will do so likewise, though he is still ready to insist on Turkish proposal being accepted unconditionally.

He then told me that the Turks have offered to withdraw their troops from Servian territory if the armistice is accepted, on condition that the territory shall not be militarily occupied while it lasts.

It is essential, however, he said, with regard to these proposals that your Lordship should state clearly which Her Majesty's Government are disposed to maintain and recommend, in order that he may be able to act in concert with them.

His Excellency leaves for Pesth this evening, and if he remains there I shall go also, as communications through Baron Orczy lead to misunderstandings as evidenced by my telegram of the 14th.

Doc. 231 *Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.**—(Received October 17, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

St. Petersburg, October 17, 1876, 4 P.M.

ACTING Minister for Foreign Affairs informed me this morning that Prince Bismarck, without giving any decided opinion, had, however, admitted the explanations of Prince Gortchakow against long armistice.

Doc. 232

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated confidentially to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, October 18.)

(Télégraphique.)

Constantinople, le 17 Octobre, 1876.

LE Gouverneur-Général de Widin nous télégraphie ce qui suit :—

"Dans la nuit du 25 Septembre, vieux style, 260 Russes armés ont passé en Serbie, par Tourno-Séverin; la nuit suivante, 240 autres individus se sont servis de la même voie pour se rendre à Belgrade à bord du bateau le 'Déligrad.' Le 27 du même mois, 60 Russes ont traversé également Tourno-Séverin pour aller en Serbie. Parmi ces gens, on en a remarqué plusieurs portant le costume et parlant la langue Circassien. Recrutés parmi les Cosaques du Daghestan, ils ont été dirigés en grande partie vers Belgrade et à Nigotine, très probablement pour être lancés, le cas échéant, vers nos villages Circassiens, pour commettre toutes sortes de méfaits à la faveur de leur déguisement, et tromper, même parfois nos corps de gardes."

Veillez entretenir confidentiellement le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères de la nouvelle tactique à laquelle les Serviens ont recours.

* Repeated to Embassies.

Doc. 233

Prince Gortchakow to Count Schouvaloff.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Count Schouvaloff, October 18.)

NOS arguments pour limiter l'armistice à six semaines n'ont été refutés par personne. D'ailleurs nous admettons qu'il pourrait être prolongé si les négociations de paix l'exigent, mais nous maintenons le principe.

Safvet maintient les six mois comme résolution inébranlable, rejette le système autonome ainsi que le Protocole. Il repousse donc indirectement les bases Anglaises affirmant que les réformes promises par la Porte suffisent.

Accepterait-on ce défi jeté à la face de toute l'Europe ? Pour notre part nous ne le ferons pas. Personne ne désire plus que nous l'accord Européen sur un but commun d'humanité et de civilisation. Nous n'apportons dans la question aucune vue intéressée, mais il y a des limites que l'honneur et la dignité ne permettent pas de dépasser. Nous le devons à l'histoire qui en jugera.

L'obstination de la Porte cesserait si l'absence d'union entre les Puissances et des insinuations secrètes à Constantinople ne l'encourageraient.

Vous parlez de l'acceptation des six mois par les autres Puissances, nous en doutons. Entre autres l'Allemagne ne s'est pas encore prononcée.

Doc. 234

Mr. Malet to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 18.)

(Telegraphic.)

Rome, October 18, 1876, 4.50 P.M.

THE following translation of a telegram from Italian Representative at Cettigné, dated to-day, 10 A.M. :—

"Austria has telegraphed to its Agent to say to the Prince that it thanks him for his acceptance of the armistice in principle, and that it requests him to try to suspend his ulterior decisions, because England will make another proposition on the duration of the armistice."

Minister for Foreign Affairs asked me to express to your Lordship his great satisfaction at the last part of this telegram.

Doc. 235

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, October 18, 1876, 5.30 P.M.

HER Majesty's Government have not agreed upon any fresh proposals with Count Schouvaloff. A Cabinet Council will be held to-morrow, after which I may be in a position to give further instructions.

Doc. 236

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 18.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, October 18, 1876.

FROM Monson :—

"With reference to my telegram of this morning respecting Russian *casus belli*, I have reason to believe that my informant, French Agent, exaggerated the language used to him by the Prince.

"His Highness has telegraphed to Belgrade that he has placed himself in the hands of Mediating Powers, and declared to the foreign Agents here that he accepts the armistice, remarking only that he thinks six months too long."

Doc. 237

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 528.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, October 18, 1876.

THE Russian Ambassador called upon me this afternoon and read to me a telegram from Prince Gortchakow to the following effect :—

His Highness states that no one has yet refuted the arguments adduced by Russia for the limitation of the armistice to six weeks. Moreover, while maintaining this principle

the Russian Government admit that the armistice might be prolonged if the negotiations for peace rendered this necessary.

He remarks that the Turkish Foreign Minister adheres inflexibly to the term of six months, and rejects the system of autonomy and the proposed Protocol; thus indirectly refusing the basis proposed by England, and affirming the sufficiency of the reforms promised by the Porte.

Prince Gortchakow asks whether this defiance of all Europe is to be accepted; Russia, his Highness says, certainly will not do so. No Power is more desirous of a general European agreement in the interests of humanity and civilisation. Russia has no interested views in this question, but there are limits which cannot be passed consistently with honour and dignity. The Russian Government leave their conduct to the judgment of history.

His Highness believes that the obstinacy of the Porte would cease if it were not encouraged by the absence of union among the Powers; and in reply to an observation addressed to him by Count Schouvaloff as to the acceptance of the six months' armistice by the other Powers, Prince Gortchakow expresses his doubt whether this is the fact, stating that, among others, Germany has given no decided opinion.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 238

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 446.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 18, 1876.

IT was stated by your Excellency in your telegram of yesterday that Count Andrassy had informed you that it had been reported to him by Count Beust that Count Schouvaloff had telegraphed to Livadia that, though Her Majesty's Government considered themselves to be engaged by their acceptance of the Turkish proposal for an armistice of five months, he presumed that, if a Power accepted the five months with the condition that in the event of the Porte refusing its assent to the decisions of a Conference, the armistice would terminate *ipso facto*, such an expedient would be accepted. Count Andrassy had said that he did not understand whether this suggestion had been made with my sanction; but he had added that, if Her Majesty's Government assented to it, he would also assent, though he was ready to insist on the unconditional acceptance of the Turkish proposal. He expressed the wish that he might be told what course Her Majesty's Government were disposed to maintain and recommend in order that he might act in concert with us.

My reply to Count Andrassy's question is that I have agreed upon no fresh proposals with Count Schouvaloff. As regards the course which Her Majesty's Government will adopt under present circumstances I may be in a position to give you further instructions after the meeting of the Cabinet, which has been summoned for to-morrow.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 239

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 447. Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 18, 1876.

THE Austrian Ambassador communicated to me this afternoon the instructions given by his Government to their Ambassador at St. Petersburg with regard to the Turkish proposal for a five months' armistice.

The instructions state that the opinion of the Austrian Government is decidedly in favour of a long armistice, as better in the interests of peace and of commerce; but that it is important that the Porte should accept the *status quo* for Servia and Montenegro as a basis of peace, and should also declare its readiness to abide by the decision of the Powers.

The Austrian Government add, that in view of the approaching meeting of the Austro-Hungarian Parliaments, it would be difficult for them to refuse the Turkish proposal, and that being under the necessity of pronouncing a public decision they declare themselves ready to accept it.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 240
(No. 448.)

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 18, 1876.

THE Austrian Ambassador called upon me this afternoon and read to me a telegram from Count Andrassy, stating that he had informed your Excellency that the Austrian Government accept the Turkish proposal of armistice as it stands ("telle quelle") without restriction, and have recommended it to Servia and Montenegro.

Count Andrassy has instructed Count Beust to make the same communication to me, and to say that he will be glad to be informed if there should be any change of view on the part of Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 241
(No. 665.)

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.

My Lord,

Foreign Office, October 18, 1876.

THE German Ambassador called upon me this afternoon at my request, and I spoke to him in the sense of the telegraphic instruction which I addressed to your Lordship yesterday.

I said that being led to anticipate objections by the Porte to the bases of peace which had been proposed by England in concert with the other Powers, Her Majesty's Government had, at the instance of Russia, pressed the Porte to agree to an armistice of not less than a month, with the intention that a Conference should immediately follow on its conclusion.

The Turkish Government had accepted the armistice, proposing that it should be for five months; but the Russian Government had objected to so long a term, and insisted on its limitation to a month or six weeks, subject to renewal if necessary. They had also intimated that their acceptance of a Conference would be conditional on the exclusion of a Turkish Representative.

The efforts of Her Majesty's Government to bring about an agreement between the views of the opposite parties seemed thus to be exhausted, and it must, I thought, remain for some other Power, hitherto unpledged, to come forward with a fresh proposal, if one could be discovered which would be likely of acceptance.

The Government of Germany, which had hitherto maintained an attitude of reserve, and was not committed to any decided opinion upon the points at issue, might be able usefully to intervene at this juncture, and to exert the great influence which they undoubtedly possessed, to procure the acceptance of some compromise, and avert the danger, which now seemed imminent, of an open rupture between Turkey and Russia.

I begged Count Münster to lay these observations before Prince Bismarck, who would be ready, I felt sure, to exert himself, as far as lay in his power, to prevent any further disturbance of European peace.

Count Münster promised that he would do so, and would make me acquainted as soon as possible with Prince Bismarck's views, but said that he was unable at present to give me any information on the subject.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 242

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 19.)

(No. 879. Very Confidential.)

My Lord,

Paris, October 16, 1876.

IN the very Confidential despatch marked No. 825, which I had the honour to write to your Lordship on the 2nd instant, I mentioned that the Duc Decazes had expressed to me the opinion that if the Emperor Alexander could succeed in recovering the part of Bessarabia ceded by the Treaty of Paris, the difficulty of settling with His Majesty all other questions relative to Turkey would not prove to be very great.

In the course of the conversation which he had with me this morning the Duc Decazes expressed this opinion again, but he did not dwell upon the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

Doc. 243

Mr. Corbett to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 19.)

(No. 97.)

My Lord,

Berne, October 17, 1876.

THE President told me yesterday that the Federal Government had observed with disquiet the rumours which have of late appeared in various German and Italian papers relative to the supposed understanding between Italy and Russia in case a war, which he considered inevitable, should break out in Europe, and the possible acquisition by Italy of the remaining Italian territories of Austria.

His Excellency said that the position of Switzerland in the event of such a change would be very unsatisfactory, as Switzerland, one Canton—Tessin—of which is entirely Italian, would then be the only foreign country which comprised within its limits territory inhabited by the Italian race.

M. Welti also told me that he regretted to learn from advices received from various Italian ports that preparations were being made as if it was thought Italy was about to engage in war.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWIN CORBETT.

Doc. 244

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 19, 10 A.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Confidential.)

Berlin, October 19, 1876, 8.10 A.M.

COUNT MUNSTER has been instructed to communicate Prince Bismarck's answer to your Lordship. He had no objection to six months' armistice, but sees no reason to press it at the present juncture. He prefers to reserve his opinion, and to observe a benevolent neutrality until other Powers are agreed.

Doc. 245

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, October 19, 1876, 3.20 P.M.

THE German Ambassador communicated to me late last evening the following telegram from Berlin :—

"We have from the beginning of the Oriental crisis always had in view as principal object the maintenance of peace in Europe. In the interest of peace we have tried to prevent that the friendly Powers more directly interested in the East should separate, and we have always tried to avoid taking any decisive part for one of the Powers. As far as a general undertaking could be obtained we joined them and put our influence to their disposal; but we never went further than that. We cannot deviate from this line of conduct, and cannot take a leading part, which the natural position of Germany in the East would not justify, and which might endanger the peace of Europe.

"Although we are of opinion that an armistice of six months appears to us to be acceptable, and that we would have wished Russia to accept it, we do not think that, taking into account the position we have held till now, we would be justified to exercise a pressure on the resolution of other Powers. An armistice, however, of six weeks, the longest term on which an agreement was obtained, and which is two weeks more than England originally proposed, might perhaps offer some chance for a solution."

I have called his attention to the passage stating that an armistice of six weeks is "two weeks more than England originally proposed;" and pointed out that the proposal of England in the telegram to Sir H. Elliot on the 1st of September was for an armistice of "not less than a month's duration;" and again on the 5th instant an armistice of "not less than a month."

Point this out also at Berlin.

Doc. 246

The Earl of Derby to Count Münster.

Dear Count Münster,

Foreign Office, October 19, 1876.

IN the telegram which you were so good as to communicate to me last night, it is stated that an armistice of six weeks is "two weeks more than England originally proposed."

The proposal made by Her Majesty's Government on the 1st of September was for "an armistice of not less than a month's duration," and on the 5th of October Sir H. Elliot was again instructed to urge an armistice of "not less than a month."

I have instructed Lord O. Russell to point this out at Berlin, and shall be obliged if you will also assist me in clearing up any misapprehension that may be in the matter.

Yours faithfully,
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 247
(No. 451.)

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 19, 1876.

COUNT ANDRASSY stated to your Excellency, in the conversation reported in your telegram of the 17th instant, that he wished me to state clearly what course Her Majesty's Government are disposed to maintain and recommend, in order that he might act in concert with them.

Her Majesty's Government have every wish to communicate most frankly with Count Andrassy, and reciprocate his wish for concerted action. It is their desire that you should inform him that, having accepted the proposal of the Porte for an armistice of six months, they will not make any new proposition; but that, if the Porte is willing to reduce the length of the armistice as desired by Russia, Her Majesty's Government will place no obstacles in the way.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 248 *Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received October 21, at night.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Paris, October 21, 1876.

I HAVE communicated to Duc Decazes the decision of Her Majesty's Government respecting the armistice.

He says that he himself has never sent any instruction to Constantinople in answer to Turkish proposal of armistice of six months.

He desires to ask you what will be the attitude of England if Russia actually invades Turkey.

Doc. 249 *Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received October 21, at night.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, October 21, 1876, 9.15 A.M.

IN the event of Russia threatening an occupation of a Turkish province or any other act of hostility, would it not be advisable for me to advise Porte to appeal to the Powers under the VIIIth Article of the Treaty of Paris?

Doc. 250 *Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 23.)*

(No. 463. Very Confidential.)

My Lord,

Berlin, October 19, 1876.

THE Austrian Ambassador, who returned to his post on the 17th instant, told me privately and confidentially that he found to his great regret that the German Government appeared more favourably disposed to Russia than to Austria at present, which he attributed to the influence of the personal feelings of friendship and sympathy which attach the Emperor William to his nephew the Emperor Alexander.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 251 Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 23.)

(No. 465. Most Confidential.)

My Lord,

Berlin, October 20, 1876.

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 659, of the 17th instant, just received, asking me whether I am able to explain the apparent confusion with respect to the attitude of Prince Bismarck as regards the acceptance of the Turkish proposal for an armistice of five months, I have the honour to state that the German Government were in favour of the armistice as proposed by Her Majesty's Government and agreed to by the Powers, and urged its acceptance on the Servian Government through their Agent and Consul-General, who was instructed to act in concert with his colleagues of Austria and England at Belgrade.

Prince Bismarck had no objection to the Turkish proposal to prolong the armistice from one to five months, but when the Russian objections were submitted to the German Emperor at Baden, His Majesty was loth to press the matter against the wishes of his nephew the Czar.

* * * * *

Doc. 252 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 23.)

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, October 21, 1876, 10.45 P.M.

SOME days ago, speaking for myself, as I said, and without instructions, I strongly recommended the Porte to express itself ready to accept the shorter armistice demanded by Russia, provided it was coupled with an engagement that it should be extended for a similar term if the negotiations were not concluded before it expires.

The advice has been acted upon.

When General Ignatiev called upon the Grand Vizier to-day, his Highness told him that he would agree to an armistice of six weeks on condition that if the negotiations were not ended by that time it should be renewed for a similar term, without a shot being fired on either side, and again for two months if the second period passed without result.

General Ignatiev said that he would take the proposal into consideration.

It appears impossible for the Porte to do more.

Doc. 253

The Earl of Derby to Lord Lyons.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, October 23, 1876, 2.15 P.M.

WITH reference to your telegram of the 21st instant, Her Majesty's Government are unable at present to pronounce an opinion on the very grave question referred to in the Duc Decazes' inquiry.

Doc. 254 Mr. Malet to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 23, 5 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

Rome, October 23, 1876, 3 P.M.

THE Italian Minister at Constantinople telegraphs, under date of the day before yesterday, that General Ignatiev called upon him after seeing the Grand Vizier and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and said he was in hopes the Porte would accept six weeks' armistice.

The Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs declares most positively that Italy has no engagement with any foreign Power, and only seeks the maintenance of peace.

Doc. 255

*The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.**

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, October 23, 1876, 5.25 P.M.

WITH reference to your telegram of the 20th, I have never agreed to, much less suggested, any Conference from which the Porte should be excluded. I have mentioned

* Repeated to Embassies.

Constantinople as the place where it might be held, but that question remains open. I have not pledged Her Majesty's Government to the selection of any particular place.

Doc. 256 Mr. Doria to the Earl of Derby.—*(Received October 24, 12.29 A.M.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.)

St. Petersburg, October 23, 1876, 5 P.M.

I HAVE seen Minister of Finance, who returned yesterday from Livadia.

He says that present position cannot continue without danger both internally and externally. Russia wants no territorial acquisition, but she must insist on obtaining for the three provinces the terms of peace proposed to the Porte by your Lordship, not in words, but as facts.

The position admits of no further delay. Roumania and Greece are moving, and if present concessions by the Porte are refused and the area of the war is extended, greater concessions will be later exacted.

Porte may possibly satisfy the present Russian exigencies by accepting the Protocol as suggested by your Lordship, and granting an armistice of two months. If the Porte declines, Russian military action is inevitable.

Preparations for war are actively making here.

Doc. 257

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—*(Received October 24, 10.55 A.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, October 23, 1876, 10 P.M.

I HAVE asked Minister for Foreign Affairs whether General Ignatiev had given him any intimation of what his Government would expect with regard to the insurgent provinces.

His Excellency replied that the General said that special arrangements would be required in favour of those provinces; that the Porte would be free afterwards to apply those arrangements to other parts of the Empire, but that a general measure applicable to all could not be accepted.

If this is insisted upon, it will be a direct encouragement to insurrection.

Doc. 258 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—*(Received October 24.)

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, October 23, 1876, 6.30 P.M.

GENERAL IGNATIEV tells people here that he expects the question of the armistice to be arranged, but that his instructions with regard to the Christians of the revolted provinces are imperative, and that the Emperor is determined to insist on autonomy, whatever the other Powers may do.

Doc. 259 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—*(Received October 24.)

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, October 23, 1876, 10.30 P.M.

A CONSPIRACY has been discovered against the Ministers who are supposed to be most favourable to granting equal rights to the Christians.

Some of those engaged in it were persons of a certain position among the Ulema, one of them having once been fixed upon as Sheik-ul-Islam.

About ten have been arrested and exiled.

They are partisans of Mahmoud Pasha, late Grand Vizier, and, according to one version, they proposed to dethrone the Sultan and replace him by the son of Abdul Aziz.

They proposed forcibly to seize the flag of the Prophet, and a religious war would have ensued.

That such a conspiracy should have been formed proves the necessity of caution in pressing the Porte on the question of reforms.

Doc. 260 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 24, 2:30 P.M.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, October 24, 1876, 11:30 A.M.

IN answer to proposal of the Grand Vizier about armistice, General Ignatiev says that he would accept such an arrangement with the following wording respecting its prolongation:—

“If, within the term of six weeks, the desired result is not obtained, the Powers will agree (*‘conviendraient’*) to renew it for six more weeks, *‘quittes’* to a renewal of it a third time for two months if the necessity for it is recognised.”

Porte wishes both parties to be bound to prolong the armistice if negotiations are not completed, and fears that General Ignatiev's form would expose it to the chance of being told, at the expiration of the first term, that Servia refused to follow advice of the Powers to prolong it.

As it will be impossible for the Turkish troops to remain long in their present positions, it will be better for the Porte that the armistice, as proposed by General Ignatiev, should be accepted before it has to withdraw them, and I have expressed this as my personal opinion. The success of the Montenegrins also renders it very desirable.

Doc. 261 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 24, 4:20 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, October 24, 1876, 1:45 P.M.

VICE-CONSUL at Sulina says that it is reported there that twenty Danubian pilots have been engaged by the Russian authorities.

Doc. 262

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, October 24, 1876, 6:48 P.M.

HER Majesty's Government have received Mr. Baring's Report, inclosed in your No. 1148 of 13th instant, with great concern, as it shows that the Commission under Sadoullah Bey does not promise to be of real service.

You cannot urge too strongly upon the Porte, in bringing to their notice Mr. Baring's statements, the necessity of taking effective measures to afford redress, execute justice, and provide at once for the protection of the Christians.

You should at the same time point out the illusory character of the inquiry, which seems to be little better than that of Edib Effendi.

Her Majesty's Government trust that the representations you have made to the Sultan may be acted on, as otherwise the results as regards the relations between Her Majesty's Government and the Porte may be serious.

Doc. 263 Consul-General Stanley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 25.)

(No. 14. Political. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Odessa, October 13, 1876.

I HAVE the honour to report that the following batteries have been ordered to be immediately placed:—

1. A battery of six guns six versts west of Ochakoff, on the bluff overlooking the sea.

2. A battery of six guns three versts west of Ochakoff.

3. A battery of three guns close to the town of Ochakoff.

4. A battery of six guns on the artificial island in the entrance to Dnieper Bay.

The above twenty-one guns are expected to be in position in six weeks.

Their bore is 9 inches.

The following is a translation of a paragraph in the “*Odessa Vestnick*” of this day:—

“We are informed that the Government has contracted with the engineer Schevtsoff, of this town, for erection of fortifications near Odessa. In view of the urgency of the

works, 5,000 workmen are indispensable, and the greater part of them is expected from the Government of Kief."

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. E. STANLEY.

Doc. 264 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 25.)

(No. 1158. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Therapia, October 16, 1876.

I ASKED Safvet Pasha this morning what reports had been received by the Turkish Government of the strength of the Russian force at present collected near the Georgian frontier.

He replied that it was believed to amount to about 130,000 men; but, to my surprise, he added that it need cause little anxiety, as Russia could not venture to make an attack in that quarter on account of the discontent prevailing among her own populations, and of the knowledge that they would have in their rear a warlike Mussulman people who would make common cause with Turkey.

I said that the accounts I had seen placed the Russian force at a considerably higher figure than what he had named, and as there was notoriously no Turkish army which could cope with it, the supposed discontent in the Russian provinces offered very slight security against attack.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Doc. 265 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 25.)

(No. 1159. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Therapia, October 16, 1876.

I INFORMED your Lordship last week that, at the urgent entreaty of the Sultan, the Grand Vizier had withdrawn the resignation which he had submitted to His Majesty.

I learn, however, confidentially that this was not a very correct representation of what occurred, and that what Mehemet Ruchdi Pasha had asked was to be allowed for three months to abstain from business in order that he might have the rest that his health required.

The Sultan's answer appears to have been a peremptory message that he could not be relieved of his duties till he had got the country out of the difficulties for many of which he was responsible.

There can be no doubt that the Sultan is greatly dissatisfied with his Grand Vizier, and it must be admitted that he has too much cause.

Mehemet Ruchdi Pasha has in fact disappointed all his friends, who, although they knew him to be wanting in initiative and decision, were not prepared to find him opposing every measure of progress; such, however, has proved the case, and everything that has been done has been accomplished by the energy of other members of the Government, feebly supported, if not actually opposed, by their chief.

At the Grand Councils at which he presided he put the questions submitted to them by the Government in such a manner as to imply that he did not approve of them, and he then remained silent, leaving his colleagues to fight the battle.

This was what occurred when the question of the armistice was discussed, and its acceptance was wholly owing to the energy with which it was advocated by Midhat Pasha supported by Safvet Pasha.

On the question of reforms he showed himself equally obstructive, and it may be said to have been in spite of him that decisions which ought to have been come to four months ago were at last grudgingly assented to.

His integrity, and the confidence reposed in him by the Conservative Mussulman party, give him a strength which would have rendered his dismissal dangerous; but I am assured that some of his most important colleagues are now likely to attempt to procure his fall, in spite of the difficulty of finding a suitable successor.

It is understood that Midhat Pasha would not consent to occupy the post, knowing that his reforming views have made him too obnoxious to the bigoted Mussulmans, whose influence he could hardly hope to combat.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Doc. 266 *Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 25.)*
(No. 1160.)

My Lord,

Therapia, October 17, 1876.

AT a moment when Russian volunteers and Russian supplies of all descriptions are being poured so freely into a province in rebellion against its Suzerain, it may not be without interest to show what the views formerly held by the Russian Government have been as to the duties of neighbouring States towards each other.

The inclosed extract from a local paper contains the copy of a vigorous protest by the Russian Ambassador against the Porte for having allowed two foreign officers, twelve men, and some supplies to the Caucasus at the time of the insurrection of 1857.

I have, &c
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Doc. 267

Inclosure in Doc. 266.

Newspaper Extract.

LES vues Russes relatives aux droits et aux obligations des neutres semblent avoir subi des modifications considérables pendant les vingt dernières années. En 1857, lorsque les Circassiens étaient en révolte contre le Gouvernement Russe, l'Ambassadeur Russe, M. de Bouteneff, signala au Grand Vézir qu'un vaisseau battant pavillon Ottoman, chargé de munitions de guerre et transportant deux officiers (étrangers) qui avaient servi dans l'armée Turque, ainsi que dix ou douze simples soldats Polonais, était à l'ancre dans la Corne d'Or, prêt à prendre la mer et à gagner les côtes de la Circassie. Le Grand Vézir défendit le départ du bateau, mais les munitions furent, paraît-il, transbordées sur un autre vaisseau portant le pavillon Anglais, si nos souvenirs sont exacts. Les officiers et la petite troupe Polonaise y prirent aussi passage et atteignirent leur destination. Lorsque ce fait fut connu de l'Ambassadeur Russe, l'Ambassadeur, M. de Bouteneff, adressa à Edhem Pacha, alors Ministre Ottoman des Affaires Etrangères, une note sévère qui portait la date du 26 Février et dont une copie est sous nos yeux. Le document se termine ainsi :—

“Le Soussigné croit superflu de relever toute la gravité d'un semblable défaut de surveillance, au moment même où il avait appelé sur ces menées la sérieuse attention du Gouvernement Ottoman; et il abandonne au jugement éclairé et impartial de son Excellence Edhem Pacha, Ministre des Affaires Etrangères de la Sublime Porte, d'apprécier la fâcheuse impression que ce fait ne manquera pas de produire sur le Cabinet Impérial de St. Pétersbourg. L'envoi de ces secours d'hommes et de munitions, destinés à des populations en état d'hostilité avec le Gouvernement Impérial et dont la Sublime Porte avait été prévenue par les démarches antérieures du Soussigné, lui impose toutefois le devoir de protester dès à présent contre un acte aussi contraire aux relations de paix et de bon voisinage qu'aux sentiments d'amitié dont le Soussigné a été assez heureux pour recueillir l'expression de la bouche même de Sa Majesté le Sultan. En s'acquittant de ce regrettable devoir, le Soussigné saisit l'occasion, &c.”

Il paraîtrait résulter de tout cela qu'en 1857, selon les idées de la Russie, ce n'était pas conforme aux relations pacifiques et de bon voisinage que la Porte, par manque de surveillance, laissât glisser une cargaison de munitions de guerre à travers le Bosphore à destination de la côte des Provinces Caucasiennes alors révoltées contre le Gouvernement Russe. Dans le cas dont il s'agit, la Russie était directement intéressée, et l'intérêt aurait pu nuancer ses opinions. Mais dix ans plus tard la Russie, de concert avec les autres Puissances Européennes, exprime une opinion contraire à la “guerre couverte” faite par la Grèce, à l'appui de l'insurrection Crétoise. Presque dix ans après cet événement nous mettent en face de la Russie permettant à ses officiers et à ses soldats d'aller, par centaines et par milliers, grossir les rangs des Serbes révoltés, facilitant la transmission de munitions de guerre de Russie en Serbie, tolérant les efforts des Comités, encourageant les souscriptions aux emprunts Serbes—bref faisant la même “guerre couverte” qu'elle avait reprochée à la Grèce, et enfin faisant, avec une activité non déguisée, exactement les mêmes choses qui, pour un cas isolé, où la passivité avait été la seule faute des Turcs, avaient provoqué la protestation que nous avons citée. Mais ce n'est pas tout. Lorsque l'Ambassadeur de Turquie à St. Pétersbourg faisait récemment des remontrances auprès du Prince Gortchakow au sujet de l'aide effective que la Russie apportait ouvertement aux rebelles Serbes, les remontrances de l'Ambassadeur furent reçues

par une fin de non-recevoir dédaigneuse, négligeant complètement les principes sur lesquels la Russie s'était basée en 1857 à l'égard de l'insurrection du Caucase, et en 1867 à l'égard de celle de Crète. Tant qu'il plaira à l'Europe de tolérer la conduite contraire aux lois internationales de la Russie, celle-ci en usera et en abusera. Mais il est temps de mettre un terme à cet état de choses, et à moins que l'Europe ne soit disposée à se soumettre à la dictature de la Russie, il faut apprendre à la Grande Puissance du Nord que la loi internationale est une loi, et que la police de l'Europe en exigera l'observance même au prix d'une guerre. Maintes accusations peuvent être justement formulées contre la Turquie; mais, quels que soient ses défauts, elle a le droit d'être traitée avec justice, et l'acte criminel de la traiter avec injustice ne sera aucunement atténué par la force de la coalition qui le mettrait à exécution.

Doc. 268

Major-General Sir A. Kemball to Sir H. Elliot.

Sir,

Head-Quarters' Camp, before Alexinatz, October 8, 1876.

I HAVE the honour to subjoin six telegrams (A to E inclusive) addressed to your Excellency since the date of my despatch of the 2nd instant.

The movement ordered for to-morrow is directed, I understand, to effect the occupation of Djunis at the meeting of the main roads which lead to Krusevatz and Deligrad, but whether it is to be restricted to that object or to be intended as the first step to any settled plan of operations comprising an advance into the country by Stabatatz at the junction of the two Moravas has not transpired. It is certain only that the lines of Alexinatz-Deligrad will not be attacked, but in the event of an advance will be watched by a corps of observation detached from this army and reinforced by a division which is said to be now on its way from Constantinople.

I venture to suggest that the orders issued by the Porte at your Excellency's instance, with a view to restrain the outrages of the irregular levies, should be reiterated. The more uncontrollable of the Bashi-Bazouks have withdrawn from the camp, or have been dismissed to their homes, and the remainder have been attached to the several brigades and divisions with the view in some sort of bringing them under command; but I am not aware that their organization as paid soldiers, in the sense contemplated in your Excellency's instruction to me, has yet been effected, and without it I apprehend that their habits of plunder may prove to have been checked only by the want of opportunity.

I fear there may be some truth in the Servian complaint of the mutilation by the Turkish soldiery not of the wounded, but of the killed on the field of battle. This suspicion is justified by the three or four instances observed by myself of the heads of the slain lying severed from their bodies over a very limited portion of ground, though no cases of further mutilation fell under my notice.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. R. KEMBALL.

Telegram (A).

Head-Quarters, Tuesday, P.M.

Nothing extraordinary yesterday or to-day. Enemy fortifying position on plain and in the rear. Ahmed Ayoub Pasha advised Porte that armistice terminated, but no movement apparently contemplated by Turks.

(Signed) KEMBALL.

Telegram (B).

Head-Quarters, Thursday, 10 P.M.

As yet resumption of hostilities has been followed by unusual quiet, but Ahmed Ayoub Pasha preparing to advance in the direction of Krusevatz the day after to-morrow.

(Signed) KEMBALL.

Telegram (C).

Head-Quarters, Friday, 9 P.M.

Nothing to report except that movement intended for to-morrow has been postponed.

(Signed) KEMBALL.

Telegram (D).

Head-Quarters, Saturday, 10 P.M.

Abdul Kerim Pasha came out to camp to-day; still here. Sent to Alexinatz by the direction of Sultan thirteen released prisoners, dressed completely as Turkish soldiers; these were taken prisoners Yavor, forwarded Constantinople, back here. Servians 7 P.M. opened fire artillery, and infantry in half-an-hour repel supposed night attack; we did not move or fire.

(Signed) KEMBALL.

Telegram (E).

Sunday, 10 P.M.

Abdul Kerim Pasha returned to Nish; has ordered to attack enemy's position to-morrow in the direction of Krusevatz. Have observed headless bodies; at once and repeatedly remonstrated with Chief of Staff, who promised reform, but only one remedy: War Office issue general order to be subscribed by superior officers down to field officers, as have been read and explained to troops.

(Signed) KEMBALL.

Doc. 269 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 25.)
(No. 746.)

My Lord,

Vienna, October 23, 1876.

I LEARN from the Roumanian Agent that Prince Ion Ghika is expected here on his way to England to communicate with your Lordship on the present position of the Principality with reference to its possible invasion by a Russian army.

M. Balachano said that the Roumanian army would amount to, at least, 60,000 men, and would probably retire into Little Wallachia on the entrance of a Russian force into the country; but that the policy of the Government would depend on the support which it might expect from the Guaranteeing Powers. He said that Prince Ion Ghika was, he believed, instructed to ask your Lordship whether the Treaty of Paris is still in force, and whether a violation of the neutrality of the Principality would be prevented. To inquiries which he has made on the subject of Count Andrassy he said he had received no answer, although he has given his Excellency to understand that the Government is ready to employ the military resources of the country in defence of its neutrality if it can depend on receiving support from Austria and the other Guaranteeing Powers. The Government, he said, was convinced that they would not save Bessarabia by acting in concert with Russia; but, nevertheless, if they are left unaided by the Guaranteeing Powers they may have no other course but to endeavour by a friendly attitude towards the Russian Government to diminish as far as possible the evils which must result from a Russian occupation of Roumanian territory.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Doc. 270 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 25.)

(Telegraphic.)

Buda-Pesth, October 24, 1876.

IN the opinion of Count Andrassy the first step to be taken in a negotiation between the Porte and Montenegro for a separate peace should be for the Prince to state what he claims. He considers that concessions of territory on the side of Albania might be made to His Highness without inconvenience, but that were a port granted to him, notwithstanding his present annoyance at Russian money going principally to Servia, his old relations with St. Petersburg would be re-established and his port would become virtually a Russian one.

Doc. 271 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 25.)

(Telegraphic.)

Buda-Pesth, October 24, 1876.

COUNT ANDRASSY doubts the news of the proposal of the Porte respecting the armistice being accepted by Russia, but does not understand Russian objection to a long one, as he does not believe she is yet ready for war. It is of little importance, however, whether the armistice is long or short, as she can always find a pretext to begin war if she is determined to do so.

He spoke with some bitterness to-day of the vacillation of France and Italy on this question, and said that all effective action is impossible while no Power knows what is to be expected from another. I therefore said that he had better begin by telling me what he would do if a Russian army entered Bulgaria; and he answered I must be satisfied by his having already stated that, whatever happens, he is determined to defend Austro-Hungarian interests. He has endeavoured, he said, to stop provocative articles in the press here against Russia; but he has stated plainly to what he will object, as prejudicial to the interests of his country; and with regard to the reforms, he is still of opinion that the demands on the Porte should be moderate, but enforced if necessary. He is quite ignorant, however, he said, of what England intends, and as to how far her future policy may be influenced by recent popular accusations.

Doc. 272

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, October 26, 1876, 2.25 P.M.

YOUR telegram dated 11.30 A.M., October 24, received.

I approve your advice to Porte to accept armistice as proposed by General Ignatiev.

Doc. 273

Mr. Doria to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 25, 5 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

St. Petersburg, October 25, 1876, 1 P.M.

COLONEL WELLESLEY reports following:—

“Grand Duke Nicholas has been summoned to Livadia.

“800 torpedoes have been sent to Odessa and 500 to Sebastopol.

“General Todleben is at Odessa.”

Doc. 274 Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 25, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

Rome, October 25, 1876.

ITALIAN Government are strongly opposed to accepting a general measure of reform instead of one confined to the insurgent Provinces, as suggested by Her Majesty's Government under guarantee of a Protocol. It would, in their opinion, be calculated to extend Russian influence. They are equally decided against the exclusion of the Turks from the Conference, which they would consider contrary to the Treaty of Paris, and an act of injustice.

Doc. 275

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 26.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, October 25, 1876, 7.20 P.M.

GENERAL IGNATIEW presented his credentials yesterday at an official audience.

I am informed that he made a speech, in which he spoke of the interest taken by the Emperor of Russia in many millions of the Sultan's subjects who were of the same religion as himself. His Imperial Majesty had been much moved by learning the sufferings to which they were exposed, and expected that measures would be taken to render a renewal of them impossible.

General Ignatiev is to have a private audience on Saturday at the request, as he tells me, of the Sultan.

Doc. 276 *Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received October 26, 7 P.M.)*

(Telegraphic.)

(Confidential.)

Therapia, October 26, 1876, 2.45 P.M.

GENERAL IGNATIEW has told one of our colleagues that the demands of Russia are that Turkey should accept an armistice of six weeks without any engagement that Servia should renew it if she thought it inconvenient; autonomy for the three Provinces; and a Conference at Constantinople from which Turks are to be excluded.

If the Porte refuses, Russia is prepared to declare war with Turkey.

My colleague observed that perhaps Turkey might not be left alone, and spoke of the feeling that is being roused in England against Russia.

General Ignatiew answered that nothing was to be feared from England; that Her Majesty's Ambassador was mystified by his Government as was often the case, but that he had himself been in direct correspondence with your Lordship from Livadia and had ascertained that the British and Russian Governments were agreed upon all points.

Doc. 277 *Consul Holmes to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 28.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Serajevo, October 28, 1876.

MOUKHTAR PASHA is reported to be surrounded, and in a most critical position.

Doc. 278

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 28, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, October 28, 1876, 6.20 P.M.

I ACQUAINTED Count Andrassy, when I saw him at Pesth, with the language of the Roumanian Agent, which I reported to your Lordship in a telegram, dated 23rd instant, and his Excellency said that the Agent had not said so much to Baron Orczy. Having, however, to-day asked the Baron what he did say, his statements to him appear to have been nearly identic with those he made to me, with the addition that the object of his Government in retiring into Little Wallachia, if not supported by England and Austria, would be to save its war material from Russia, which the Russian army in 1854 treated as its own. He did not, however, appear to have asked for an answer as to whether or not Roumania might expect Austrian support.

Prince Ghika, who will leave for London this evening, has not seen Count Andrassy.

Doc. 279

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 28, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, October 28, 1876, 6.10 P.M.

I HAVE spoken to Baron Orczy of the report at Belgrade mentioned in a telegram from your Lordship dated yesterday, that the proclamation of Servian and Roumanian independence is contemplated, with the probable assumption of the Royal titles, to which Count Andrassy was said to have waived his objections. His Excellency answered that the Austro-Hungarian Agent was instructed on the proclamation of Prince Milan as King by the army, to state that Austria-Hungary would never recognize a Servian Kingdom, and the Government has not changed its views on this point.

The Austrian Agent had, however, reported that the recognition of Servian independence would be looked on at Belgrade as some compensation for a peace on the basis of the *status quo*, but such a pretension, Baron Orczy said, could not be maintained on that basis, and no encouragement has been given to it from Vienna. Roumania and Servia are, he believes, jealously watching each other; if one declares itself independent, the other, probably, will do so likewise.

* [Editor's note: Footnote is lacking in the original print.]

Doc. 280

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 29.)

(No. 401. Very Confidential.)

My Lord,

Rome, October 24, 1876.

IN the course of my interview with M. Melegari yesterday, his Excellency, in speaking of the mission of General Sumarakoff to Vienna, said he had very good grounds for believing that the letter which he brought from the Emperor Alexander was to reclaim the fulfilment of an engagement entered into by the Emperor of Austria at Reichstadt, by which, in certain eventualities, Austria was to occupy Bosnia, and Russia Bulgaria.

On my saying that this was the first I had ever heard of any such engagement having been taken by the Emperor of Austria, M. Melegari persisted in his statement. He did not, he said, believe that there had been any written engagement to the above effect, but he had no doubt whatever that there had been a verbal one. The Emperor of Austria, however, had, his Excellency said, pleaded that the case had not, as yet, arisen when he could be called upon to fulfil his pledge.

It was just about the time, as your Lordship may perhaps remember, of General Sumarakoff's mission that the Italian press began to speak of an extension of the Italian frontier, and, unless I am mistaken, in the event of the above arrangements having been carried out by Austria and Russia, something more would have been heard of the Italian claim for a territorial compensation.

I am quite willing to credit M. Melegari with sincerity when he now disclaims any desire on the part of the Italian Government for an acquisition of territory, but I think his disclaimer must only be taken as holding good so long as the existing territorial arrangements in Europe are undisturbed. Should there, however, be any addition to the power of either Austria or Russia in the Provinces in the neighbourhood of the Adriatic, I have little doubt that the Italian Government will consider whether they would not be entitled to set up a claim to some of the Italian Provinces of Austria. At all events, it is certain that the Italian Government will watch with the utmost jealousy any territorial changes which may be intended in that part of Europe, and would not consent willingly to the cession even of a port to Montenegro, as your Lordship will have learnt by Mr. Malet's despatch No. 346 of the 3rd instant, because it would virtually be in the hands of "another Power." His Excellency spoke to me yesterday on this subject in much the same terms as he had done to Mr. Malet.

I understood from M. Melegari that there had been a certain tension in the relations between Italy and Austria at the time of General Sumarakoff's mission to Vienna, owing to the indiscretion of the Italian press which had given rise to rejoinders on the part of the press of Austria. Another circumstance which had excited suspicion on the part of the Austro-Hungarian Government was the frequent intercourse which had taken place between General Sumarakoff and the Italian Ambassador, Count Robillant, from which it was deducted that there must be something hatching between Italy and Russia. It so happened, however, that the interviews between the Russian General and the Italian Ambassador were simply in consequence of their being relatives through their wives, and had no political meaning whatever. M. Melegari added that he was happy to say that in consequence of frank explanations, the relations of Italy and Austria had been re-established on their former footing of cordiality, and he hoped they might long continue so.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. PAGET.

Doc. 281

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 29.)

(No. 402. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Rome, October 25, 1876.

I THINK it right to mention that in a conversation which I had yesterday with my Russian colleague, Baron Uxkull stated that he considered any chance of a conflict between Russia and Austria upon the Eastern question as now completely set aside ("écarté"), and the inference I draw from this observation, and the way in which it was

made, is that the Russian Government has been assured by the Cabinet of Vienna that an invasion by Russia of the Turkish Provinces will not be opposed by Austria.

Speaking of the counter-proposal of the Porte Baron Uxkull hinted that in accepting the five months' armistice Her Majesty's Government had departed from their own basis of arrangement, as agreed to by Russia.

I pointed out to him that in regard to the armistice what Her Majesty's Government had asked for was an armistice of not less than one month's duration, and not an armistice of a month, as he appeared to suppose, and that in accepting the Turkish proposal of one of five months it was impossible to find any abandonment of the terms which England had herself suggested.

I asked Baron Uxkull what were the grounds on which his Government objected to the five months' armistice.

His reply was that it would be an arrangement wholly favourable to the Turks. What, he inquired, was to become of the starving population during that time, the thousands of refugees who had emigrated from Herzegovina and Bosnia to Serbia and Austria, &c., not to speak of the drain upon the resources of Serbia and Montenegro in maintaining their armies during that long period of uncertainty as to their future destiny. Besides, added he, even if Russia could have agreed to such an armistice, the Servian Government could not have done so. If they had, the result, he said, would inevitably have followed that that adventurer (meaning Tcherniaieff) would have made a resolution, deposed Prince Milan, and had himself proclaimed in his stead.

Baron Uxkull was pleased to give me some details as to the previous history of the person in question, who, he said, had, when in command of a brigade in Central Asia, violated his orders, and instead of simply following up and dispersing the enemy, as he had been desired to do by General Kauffmann, had captured Tashkend. Well, he said, Tashkend of course could not be given back again; but, for his act of insubordination, Tcherniaieff was struck off the list of the army. He then became a notary at Moscow, and finding this profession unprofitable, he assumed the direction of the "Ruski Mir" newspaper, and then having proceeded to Serbia, the Emperor was so enraged with him, he had ordered his name to be struck off the list of Russian subjects.

I told Baron Uxkull that Her Majesty's Government had not hesitated to accept the five months' armistice, because they felt assured that it must lead to peace; and I put it to Baron Uxkull whether it was reasonable to suppose that, with the general feeling which now prevails about the Turks, Europe would ever have permitted them to recommence hostilities at the expiration of the term proposed; the Provinces and Principalities, therefore, might have felt perfectly reassured as to their future lot.

Baron Uxkull considered it certain that Russia would attack Turkey if the Porte did not accept the six weeks' or two months' armistice now proposed by Russia, with the English basis of arrangement, to which his Government still adhered.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

Doc. 282 *Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 29.)*
(No. 403.)

My Lord,

Rome, October 25, 1876.

I HEAR from one of my colleagues that he was told yesterday by Baron Uxkull that the Russian Mediterranean squadron, under command of Admiral Popoff, had left the station and come into Italian ports, some of the ships being now in Naples, others in Spezia, &c.

The Italian newspapers, which generally report the movements of foreign men-of-war in Italian ports, make no mention of the arrival of any Russian ships.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

Doc. 283 *Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 29.)*
(No. 405.)

My Lord,

Rome, October 25, 1876.

YOUR Lordship will see by Mr. Malet's despatch No. 386, Confidential, of the 20th instant, which goes home by this messenger, how decidedly M. Melegari expressed himself to him against accepting a general measure of reform for the whole Turkish

Empire, instead of requiring the one limited to the provinces under the guarantee of a Protocol, as demanded by Her Majesty's Government; and his Excellency has spoken to me also very strongly in the same sense. His great objection to it is that the practical effect of such a general measure would be to extend the influence of Russia over a much wider field. A measure of reform to be worth anything must, his Excellency argues, be accompanied by some guarantee, such as a Protocol, which would give the Powers a right to see to its faithful application. It stands, therefore, to reason, according to M. Melegari, that a general measure of reform under the guarantee of the Six Powers must inevitably turn to the advantage of Russia, and must increase the danger for the future situation by giving that Power a right of interference in every part of the Turkish dominions. The Italian Government, his Excellency said, could certainly not undertake the responsibility of being a guardian of the rights of the Sultan's Christian subjects on so vast a scale. Let the Porte give a constitution to all its provinces if it so thought proper, but first let it be preceded by special measures, such as had been sketched out under a proper guarantee to the insurgent provinces, &c. This was what had been asked for, and this was what must be insisted on.

I have found his Excellency equally strong in regard to the non-exclusion of the Porte from any Conference which may be assembled for the purpose of developing the conditions for the future administration of the provinces. Such exclusion, his Excellency considers, would be at once at variance with the Treaty of Paris, and also an act of great injustice.

M. Melegari has also expressed himself to me again to-day in the most decided terms as to the absolute necessity of upholding the territorial integrity of the Turkish Empire. It was on this account that the Italian Government, he said, had hesitated as to accepting the word "autonomy" in the English proposals, as they feared it might be calculated to imply a diminution of the Sultan's sovereign authority over the provinces in question. The terms which the Italian Government would have preferred to "local autonomy" would have been "institutions which should guarantee the equality and protection of the two races."

M. Melegari added that it was absolutely essential at the present time to guard against any departure from the stipulations of the Treaty of Paris. His Excellency does not, however, believe that, if Russia should invade any part of Turkey, it will be with the intention of remaining there.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

Doc. 284

Mr. Harriss-Gastrell to Sir A. Buchanan.—(Received at the Foreign Office, October 29.)

(No. 204. Confidential.)

Sir,

Buda-Pest, October 21, 1876.

ON the breaking out of a war between Austro-Hungary and any other country, it is believed here by well-informed persons that within the first fortnight of mobilisation an army of 200,000 men could be placed on the frontier ready to take the field, and that that number could be more than doubled in another month; and that, if the war were to be against Russia, the army would probably be concentrated in Galina and the Bukowine to the north-east of the Carpathians to undertake offensive operations towards Kiew and Odessa, and thus paralyse all movements of Russia in the Principalities and Danubian Provinces of Turkey.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. P. HARRISS-GASTRELL.

Doc. 285

Mr. Harriss-Gastrell to Sir A. Buchanan.—(Received at the Foreign Office, October 29.)

(No. 205. Confidential.)

Sir,

Buda-Pest, October 22, 1876.

SINCE his arrival here Count Andrassy has spoken freely with several Hungarians on the Eastern question, and the impressions which his Excellency's remarks have made are that he is sanguine as to peace being maintained in spite of the menaces of Russia,

especially as she is not ready for war; that Austria-Hungary can only gain by time, even if a war be merely postponed till next spring, whereas Russia will not rapidly become more ready; and that, in his opinion, England's policy, whilst trying to satisfy Russia without prejudice to the integrity of Turkey, has done harm and displeased both countries, and diminished the confidence in her pursuing a steady policy, for the endeavour to steer a course of international necessity and at the same time trim to a passing breeze of national popularity seldom, if ever, succeeded; and Austria herself had too often made the mistake of thus trimming, whilst Prince Bismarck had been successful in taking his course regardless of temporary popularity. He (Count Andrassy) did not intend to compare himself with Prince Bismarck, but he could persist in his policy in spite of the attacks now made upon him.

As to the immediate future the impression is that Count Andrassy is prepared to send a few troops into Bosnia for the moral influence of the measure, and in order to say to Russia there is no need for a forcible occupation against Turkey; but that he is likewise prepared to resist any attempt on the part of Russia to occupy Bulgaria.

His Excellency has also said that he is not going to assume for Austria-Hungary the responsibilities of Turkey by opposing occupation at any cost, for then the political position would be like that of the hare, which being chased sees another hare started and crouches in the hope that the greyhounds would be diverted and chase the other hare. Turkey would lie still, and let the hounds go after Austria-Hungary.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. P. HARRISS-GASTRELL.

Doc. 286 Count Schouvaloff to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 30.)

Mon cher Comte,

Londres, le 27 Octobre, 1876.

JE viens de recevoir un télégramme de Livadia qui répond à celui que j'y ai expédié Jeudi.

Il m'annonce qu'afin d'écarter les difficultés qui se présentent en vue d'une Conférence, l'Empereur consentirait à une combinaison qui, d'une part, n'exclue pas le Plénipotentiaire Turc de la Conférence, et, de l'autre, permette aux six autres Représentants de s'entendre préalablement entre eux.

Le télégramme dit à cet effet: que si les Plénipotentiaires peuvent se réunir préalablement en délibération pour former des conclusions sur les bases de la paix, la Conférence serait ouverte ensuite en présence du Plénipotentiaire Turc et avec sa participation.

J'espère, cher Comte, que cette solution vous paraîtra satisfaisante, et qu'aucune des Puissances n'y fera des objections.

Si l'entente pouvait s'établir ainsi, ce qui arrivera sans nul doute, si vous soutenez la proposition, il semblerait que les obstacles qui se sont présentés sont écartés, et que rien ne viendra plus troubler le courant pacifique qui, grâce à Dieu, s'est établi depuis quelques jours.

Votre, &c.

(Signé) SCHOUVALOFF.

Doc. 287 Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 30.)

(Telegraphic.)

Yalta, October 29, 1876, 4 P.M.

I HAD an interview with Prince Gortchakow this morning. He told me he considered the armistice question as almost arranged, and he is anxious that the Conference should be organised immediately.

He mentioned the compromise on the subject of the participation of Turkish Representative, by which the Representatives of the Six Powers would meet together for deliberation, and, when agreed, will present their decision at a Conference at which Turkish Representatives would assist. Your Lordship's peace proposals will be the basis, and the Representatives of the Six Powers will deliberate on their development and mode of execution.

His Highness said that Russia must insist on the reforms being real and effective, and not on paper, and likewise on a control and guarantee for their due execution; nature of guarantee would be matter for deliberation in Conference of Six Powers.

It appears to me that he aims at withdrawal of the Turkish garrisons and officers from the three Provinces, leaving the administration in the hands of the Christians, under the suzerainty of the Porte; nothing less, his Highness said, will satisfy Russia, who is determined, if necessary, to impose it.

General Ignatiev reports Sultan as willing to meet the wishes of the Emperor, and anxious to be relieved from his present difficulties; but both Sultan and Government seem to fear popular excitement, which paralyzes their action.

Prince Gortchakow represents state of affairs at Constantinople as dangerous and menacing to the Christians, and hinted that the Sultan might require support against his fanatical subjects.

In regard to Austria Prince Gortchakow was reserved, but evinced no hostile spirit, merely stating that the two Governments were in frank communication in regard to their mutual interests.

Whole question, in my opinion, depends as to whether Porte can or will grant such autonomy to the three Provinces as will satisfy Russia, and whether Austria will consent to it.

I shall despatch Queen's messenger after my audience of the Emperor on Tuesday or Wednesday.

Doc. 288 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 30, 3:30 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, October 30, 1876, 11 A.M

SIR A. KEMBALL telegraphed last night as follows:—

"Complete Turkish victory; the whole enemy's positions on left side of the Morava captured, with eleven guns. Servian loss heavy, including many foreigners. Turkish loss small. Enemy's positions of extraordinary strength, natural and artificial, literally taken with a run."

Doc. 289

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 30, 4:40 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

Belgrade, October 30, 1876, noon.

DJUNIS taken yesterday afternoon by the Turks. Servians retreating. Prince Milan left in the night for head-quarters, leaving authority with Minister for Foreign Affairs to accept armistice, which Russian Consul is confident his Government will obtain from the Porte at once.

Doc. 290 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 31, at night.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, October 31, 1876, 5:50 P.M.

RUSSIAN Government have disapproved the arrangement concerted with General Ignatiev for an armistice of two months' subsequently to be prolonged if necessary, and have ordered him to send in an ultimatum requiring the Porte to accept the armistice of six weeks or two months unconditionally.

If this is not accepted within forty-eight hours, relations between the two countries are to be broken off, and General Ignatiev is to leave Constantinople with all the members of the Embassy.

This ultimatum will be sent in to-night if the Council of Ministers now sitting does not signify to General Ignatiev the acceptance of the conditions.

Doc. 291 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 31, at night.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, October 31, 1876, 7 P.M.

PRINCE GORTCHAKOW'S telegram ordering General Ignatiev to break off relations with the Porte is conceived in very harsh and peremptory terms.

* Repeated to Embassies.

Turks are represented as having offered an insult to Europe by carrying on offensive military operations while an effort was being made to conclude an armistice, and it is intimated that the Powers will not tolerate such proceedings.

As the Servians never at any time, even during the nominal suspension of hostilities, desisted from offensive operations, the accusation against the Turks appears very gratuitous.

The loss among the Russian officers in late fights has been very heavy, and General Ignatiew is convinced this and the fall of Alexinatz will render public feeling in Russia uncontrollable.

Doc. 292

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 31, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

Belgrade, October 31, 1876, 10 P.M.

IT is reported that communications are going on between Prince Milan and the Prince of Roumania, with a view to induce the latter to come to the rescue of Servia by crossing the Danube.

More Russian volunteers expected. Servian disaster much greater than was at first supposed.

Doc. 293 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 1, 2.9 P.M.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, November 1, 1876, 11.40 A.M.

RUSSIAN ultimatum was sent in last night.

The Consuls in the interior are ordered to go to the sea-ports for greater security, and Russian interests will be entrusted to the German Embassy.

Doc. 294 Mr. Doria to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 1, 3.12 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

St. Petersburg, November 1, 1876, 1.30 P.M.

TURKISH Ambassador leaves this to-morrow for Constantinople; his departure does not arise from any political cause, but from continued illness. The members of the Embassy remain at their posts.

The staff of the Grand Duke Nicholas still here has received orders to be ready to start at a moment's notice. Every necessary arrangement for war has been made; 80,000 tons of lead were purchased by the Russian Government yesterday.

Nevertheless, there is reason to suppose that the campaign will not be opened at present.

Doc. 295 Mr. Doria to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 1, 4.40 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

St. Petersburg, November 1, 1876, 4.20 P.M.

FOLLOWING circumstances signified to Lord A. Loftus from Colonel Wellesley:—

(Secret.)

Orders expected to-night at General Staff as to whether there will be mobilization or not.

I am told that if the orders are to prepare mobilization, a manifest will appear in two days, but that no order to move will be given until two days after the issue of the manifesto.

An internal 5 per cent. loan is about to be issued.

Military Council was held last-night at the General Staff.

* Repeated to Embassies.

Doc. 296 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 1.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, November 1, 1876, 7 P.M.

PORTE will consent to the demands of the Russian ultimatum, and orders are already sent to the Military Commanders to suspend all operations. An answer in this sense will be sent to General Ignatiew this evening.

I have informed Belgrade.

Doc. 297 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 1.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Private.)

Pesth, November 1, 1876.

WITH a view to tempt Count Andrassy to speak plainly, last night I observed, as an entirely personal opinion, that circumstances appeared to me to be driving England and Austria, whatever their wishes might be, towards the relations which he had wished to establish between them four years ago.

I did not invite an answer, but his Excellency said that if Great Britain had then accepted his proposals we should not be in our present difficulties, or exposed to the eventualities with which we are now threatened.

Doc. 298

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 463 A.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 1, 1876.

I LEARN from your Excellency's telegram of yesterday that Count Andrassy had requested you to leave with him a memorandum of the language used by Prince Gortchakow to Lord A. Loftus respecting a Conference, as reported in the telegram from Yalta of the 29th ultimo, and of the ideas of Lord A. Loftus as to the demands which Russia will probably make, should a Conference assemble.

I authorize you to give Count Andrassy confidentially the Memorandum which he requires.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 299

Consul Holmes to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 3, 12:58 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

Serajevo, November 3, 1876, 11:30 A.M.

RUSSIAN Consul and wife left this suddenly yesterday. News of the fall of Deligrad has been received.

Doc. 300

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 3.)

(Telegraphic.)

Paris, November 3, 1876.

DUC DECAZES hears that General Ignatiew is pressing on his colleagues at Constantinople to begin Conference at once.

The Duke is not disposed to act so precipitately. He begs Her Majesty's Government to communicate to him as soon as possible their views on the following points:—

Where should the Conference meet?

When should it meet?

Of whom should it be composed?

If it be held at Constantinople, should each Government appoint a special Plenipotentiary in addition to its resident Ambassador?

What should be the basis of the Conference?

What instructions should be given to the Plenipotentiaries?

* Repeated to Embassies.

The Duke sent yesterday by telegraph to the French Ambassador at Constantinople an order to come immediately to Paris for instructions, but a telegram sent hence to-morrow morning would be in time to cancel this order.

Doc. 301

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.

(Telegraphic.)

(Most Confidential.)

Foreign Office, November 3, 1876, evening.

THE following telegram has been received from Sir Henry Elliot, dated November 2nd:—

“General Ignatiev assures me that it was at the instance of Prince Bismarck that the Russian Government threatened to break off relations with the Porte if it did not consent to the short armistice.”

Doc. 302

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 561 A.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, November 3, 1876.

IN reply to your telegram of the 2nd instant, I have to state to your Excellency that Her Majesty's Government have received with the greatest satisfaction the assurance which the Emperor has given to you of his anxious desire for an understanding and co-operation with England, and his solemn statement that he pledged his honour that he had no views on Constantinople nor of conquest.

You will speak in this sense both to His Imperial Majesty and Prince Gortchakow, and you will add that Her Majesty's Government will lose no time in communicating their views as to the proposed discussions and Conference.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 303

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 563.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, November 3, 1876.

I HAD some further conversation with the Russian Ambassador this afternoon on the subject of the communication he had made to me yesterday from his Government, urging that the Representatives of the Six Powers at Constantinople should be at once authorized to commence discussions on the basis of peace proposed by England.

I told Count Schouvaloff that I saw two reasons against giving such instructions.

It was no doubt true that time was of importance, but we must also remember that the matters to be discussed involved very difficult and complicated questions, which could not be settled in haste. It would be good economy to incur some delay, if we could thereby ensure a thorough examination of all the points at issue, with the prospect of arriving at a solid and permanent arrangement.

It seemed to me in the first place that the leading part in such a discussion as Prince Gortchakow proposed would be better entrusted to other persons than those who had conducted the negotiations at Constantinople of the last twelve months. During the course of those negotiations some at least, if not most, of the Representatives at Constantinople had probably become more or less committed to personal views, which would tend to embarrass them and to weaken their position in bringing forward any fresh propositions which the present circumstances might render advisable. A fresh negotiator would be more free to advocate or discuss such propositions, while the permanent Representatives at Constantinople, supposing the deliberations to take place there, would be able to assist with their advice and experience.

In the second place, I said, the British Government had always contemplated, in the event of a Conference taking place, that England at least should be represented in it by a special Plenipotentiary. Now that a Conference seemed almost inevitable, there would be something of absurdity in sending out Plenipotentiaries to take part in it, who would find the principal points already more or less settled by preliminary discussions.

The conversation then turned on the question of the manner in which a Conference should be brought about, and I told his Excellency that as there seemed to be some hesi-

tation on the part of other Powers, Her Majesty's Government were prepared to take the initiative in proposing that such a meeting should take place.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 304

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, November 3, 1876, 6.55 P.M.

WITH reference to my telegram of last night, Count Schouvaloff has requested me to correct the expressions used by him respecting a Commission, as he says he was not authorized to use that phrase. He wishes to say that "the preliminary discussions will be followed by a Conference, or by some other form of concert which may be agreed upon by the Powers."

Doc. 305 *Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received November 3, 7 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

Yalta, November 3, 1876, 1 P.M.

AFTER dinner yesterday Emperor informed me that the Porte had officially accepted the armistice, observing on the successful result of firmness in dealing with the Porte. In further conversation with His Majesty I took the opportunity to refer to the stipulation in your Lordship's peace proposals, "that there was no question of the creation of tributary State or States."

Prince Gortchakow called on me yesterday. On my referring to the desirableness of confining the question of autonomy within such limits as would be acceptable to Austria, his Highness replied, "Leave that to me; I will take that on myself, and I guarantee that there shall be no breach between Austria and Russia."

I have reason to believe that Russia can count on support of Germany.

Prince Gortchakow stated that if in the Conference to be held, Russia should be in a minority on the question of autonomy, General Ignatiev would place on record proposals of Russia and withdraw.

It is essential that the European concert should be maintained on this question, even at the price of mutual concessions, and question of autonomy appears to me to affect Austria more directly than England.

Doc. 306 *Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received November 4.)
(No. 1175.)

My Lord,

Therapia, October 20, 1876.

I HAVE had some conversation with General Ignatiev in reference to a Conference, and asked him what he knew of the place where it would be held, of the manner in which it would be constituted, and of the duties that would be assigned to it.

He said that your Lordship had proposed that it should be held at Constantinople, but that his own Government would prefer it being elsewhere, and he himself strongly shared the same opinion.

I said that I was not aware of your Lordship having brought forward Constantinople as the best place at which a Conference could be held, and I believed, on the contrary, that you had said you reserved your opinion upon the point.

There are, indeed, many objections to it, although some of those which I see may not be precisely such as General Ignatiev would view in the same light; for I would place in the first rank of them the great personal influence that he himself exercises over some of his colleagues, which upon any difference of opinion that might arise must place Her Majesty's Representative in a position of hopeless disadvantage.

If a Conference is to end by decisions which are to be imposed upon the Porte, sufficient violence will be done to the feelings of the Turks as an independent nation without the additional humiliation of their being concerted by foreign Representatives in their own capital.

General Ignatiev alluded to the proposed exclusion of a Turkish Representative from the Conference, and spoke of the possibility of overcoming the difficulties that he

recognized in the adoption of a course so wholly contrary to international usage, by having a preliminary Conference between the Representatives, and when their projects were sufficiently matured, to have a full Conference, at which a Turkish Plenipotentiary should attend, rather, apparently, to be made acquainted with decisions that had been arrived at than to discuss measures of vital importance to the Empire.

I said that before a Conference was convoked I could understand there being meetings of the foreign Representatives such as we now frequently hold, at which a common course of action might be combined, but that to dignify such meetings by giving them the character of a Conference would be to introduce a new practice of proceeding that would be open to many objections.

The General answered that it would be necessary to have something more formal than such meetings as I had alluded to.

With regard to the duties of the Conference, he said that its object would be to define the administrative autonomy, to concert the measures for giving it effect, and to determine upon the guarantees for ensuring to the Christians their full execution, probably by means of some kind of international control.

The whole of this proposal appears open to the gravest possible objections. If it is thought necessary to define more closely than has already been done by your Lordship what is meant by the expression of administrative autonomy, it would be for the Cabinets to do so rather than for their representatives here, and an attempt to go further, by concerting the measures by which the principles adopted are to be practically carried out in the administration of Turkish provinces, would be little likely to prove successful.

Against the proposal to obtain a guarantee for the execution of those measures by an International Commission or any other direct foreign control, there are many, and, as appears to me, insuperable arguments to oppose.

The weakness of the Government, and the inability of their agents to withstand the influence of persons of local importance, are the cause of much of the maladministration of the provinces, and of the grievances of which the different classes have to complain, and the establishment of a foreign control in any shape, by creating an *imperium in imperio*, would be especially calculated to increase this evil to an extent which must render provincial government nearly impossible.

The Porte would be little likely to submit to a foreign control unless it were to be imposed by the threat of material pressure, and it is far from certain that the mere threat would be sufficient to extort its consent to a measure that will be regarded as fatally undermining its authority.

Although it is in the lot of the Christians that the Powers especially interest themselves, it is the whole administration that requires reform, and harmony between the two races will not be promoted by placing one of them under foreign guardianship, while the other has to rely upon the Turkish officials.

It may, however, be practicable to obtain the guarantee that is required for the execution of the promised reforms in a form less open to objection.

There is reason to believe the new Sovereign to be sincere in his wish to inaugurate a new state of things, and his sincerity might be tested without putting the administration of his Empire under foreign control.

When the Powers bound themselves by the IXth Article of the Treaty of Paris not to interfere individually or collectively between the Sultan and his subjects, or in the internal administration of the country, they took the engagement on the faith of promises which have notoriously not been fulfilled by the other contracting party.

We seem therefore to have an undoubted right formally to intimate to the Porte that we shall not hold ourselves bound to abstain from interference till the reforms promised by the Hatt Houmayoun are fully carried out.

Little beyond the *bonâ fide* execution of that proclamation is required, and upon it we can fairly insist; but I am convinced that if we attempt ourselves to propose the measures by which it is to be effected, or directly to superintend the application of them, we shall enter upon a course which can only lead to disappointment to those who desire the real progress of the Empire.

Russia having formerly pretended to a right of protection over certain subjects of the Sultan, one of the principal benefits obtained by the Treaty of Paris was the adoption of the principle that they were no longer to look for foreign support or interference in their behalf, and I cannot believe it to be politic or desirable that this principle should be abandoned.

It might, as I have said, be partially suspended—if possible for a term fixed beforehand, to give time for the Porte to put into practical execution the measures which have

been promised for securing equality to all races; but, if the principle of European interference is once admitted, there can be no doubt which of the Powers will be able to turn it to its own account, nor of the trouble into which it will ultimately lead us.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Doc. 307 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 4.)
(No. 1176.)

My Lord,

Therapia, October 21, 1876.

IN reply to your Lordship's despatch No. 639 inclosing the copy of Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield's report of his reception by Prince Charles, and asking how the question respecting the title of Roumania now stands, I have to express my regret that, under the pressure of business, I omitted to report to your Lordship that Safvet Pasha had informed me as well as the Roumanian Agent that the Porte had decided to recognise the title.

I telegraphed this resolution to Colonel Mansfield in the following words, which ought, at the same time, to have been transmitted to your Lordship:—

"The title of Roumania may be regarded as conceded by the Porte."

There has, however, been no official announcement of this decision, which, as it involves a change in the designation assigned by the Treaties to the United Principalities, the Porte will probably, as it has frequently stated, think it necessary to notify to the other contracting Powers for their concurrence.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Doc. 308 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 4.)
(No. 1177.)

My Lord,

Therapia, October 21, 1876.

IN reply to your Lordship's despatch No. 626 I have the honour to inform you that the 200 irregular Circassian cavalry, reported by me as having been sent to Philippopolis, were not intended for service in that district, and were immediately forwarded to Nisch.

This irregular cavalry is stated to be extremely useful as "éclaireurs."

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Doc. 309

Telegram to Her Majesty's Ambassadors at Paris, Rome, Berlin, Vienna, St. Petersburg, and Constantinople.

Foreign Office, November 4, 1876, 6.30 P.M.

AS there appears to be some hesitation about the formal proposal of a Conference, Her Majesty's Government have determined to take the initiative, and you should propose to the Government to which you are accredited a Conference to be held forthwith at Constantinople, in which all the Guaranteeing Powers and the Porte shall take part, and each Government may have two Representatives.

You will propose the following bases for the deliberations of the Conference, as suggested by Her Majesty's Government:—

1. The independence and territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire.
2. A declaration that the Powers do not seek for territorial advantages, exclusive influence or commercial concessions, as in the Protocols of September 17, 1840, and August 3, 1860. (See State Papers, vol. xxviii, p. 348, and vol. li, p. 279.)
3. The terms of pacification proposed by Sir H. Elliot to the Porte on my instruction of September 21.

If the Powers agree to this proposal, Her Majesty's Government will at once appoint a special Ambassador to proceed to Constantinople to take part in the Conference.

If desired by the other Powers, Her Majesty's Government would not object to their two Plenipotentiaries joining in preliminary discussions with the Plenipotentiaries of the other five Powers before the opening of the Conference—these discussions to be on the same bases as those proposed for the Conference.

Doc. 310

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, November 4, 1876, 6.45 P.M.

WITH reference to my other telegram respecting the Conference, I have to state that Her Majesty's Government have considered it would be useful that a special Ambassador should be sent to the Conference, but they desire you should act with him and wish you to understand that there is nothing in the appointment which in any way affects their confidence in you as Her Majesty's Representative, and that the special Ambassador will not interfere at all with the ordinary business of the Embassy, being merely appointed *ad hoc* to attend the Conference with you.

Doc. 311

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 566.)

Foreign Office, November 5, 1876.

My Lord,

I HAVE received your Excellency's telegram of the 3rd instant, reporting that in a conversation with Prince Gortchakow his Highness stated to you that if in the Conference to be held Russia should be in a minority on the question of autonomy, General Ignatiev would place on record the proposals of Russia and then withdraw.

I have mentioned this language to Count Schouvaloff, and I expressed at the same a hope that it does not represent the serious intention of the Russian Government.

It appears to Her Majesty's Government that if each Government is to go into the Conference with a settled plan, which it declines to modify, no agreement can possibly be come to, and the Conference is useless.

I have to request that you will take an opportunity of speaking to Prince Gortchakow in this sense.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 312

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 5, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Confidential.)

Vienna, November 5, 1876, 2.45 P.M.

HAVING been requested by Count Andrassy to call on him this morning, I took with me your Lordship's telegram of yesterday relative to the composition of a Conference to be held at Constantinople, and the basis for its deliberations.

He had already received a telegram on the subject from Count Beust, and said that he did not feel satisfied with the explanation it contained as to the question of the autonomy of the Turkish Provinces, and before he agreed to take part in the Conference he wished to know whether Her Majesty's Government are prepared to maintain the understanding formerly come to between the two Governments as to the signification of the term "administrative autonomy," and that they will resist any attempt to give it a wider interpretation.

He said that the question was a vital one, as any system which would lead to the "chimera of disintegration" of the Turkish Empire would be more fatal to it than the entire loss of a portion of its territory. He said that the question being too important for him to form an opinion upon it without mature deliberation, he begged that I would communicate to him in writing the proposal which I had been instructed to make to him, and I promised to do so in the course of the day.

He also asked whether it was essential that the second Plenipotentiaries should have the rank of Ambassador, as he had nobody to send to whom he could give that position, and he further stated that he considered the Plenipotentiaries should not act under general instructions alone, but submit various points which might be discussed to their respective Governments for their final orders respecting them. In his own case, as responsible to Parliament, he said that he could not give anyone authority to act for him by merely general instructions.

Doc. 313

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 5, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Confidential.)

Vienna, November 5, 1876, 3.15 P.M.

DURING my interview with Count Andrassy to-day, he said there is another question at issue of more immediate importance than the Conference, namely, the principle on which the delimitation for the armistice is to be carried out.

The natural course would be for the different forces to hold the ground they occupy, but he fears a proposal is about to be brought forward for the withdrawal from Servia of the Turkish troops, as the peace is to be negotiated on the basis of the *status quo ante*. In Montenegro also he understands that the Prince will make difficulties as to revictualling of the fortresses, besides if the Turkish troops are to evacuate Montenegrin territory, the Montenegrins should evacuate that of Turkey.

These are all questions, he said, that cannot be decided by military delegates, and which ought to be arranged diplomatically before the Delegates enter on their duties.

Doc. 314 *Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 5.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, November 5, 1876, 5.30 P.M.

AS Major Gonne informs me that all the Delegates from Constantinople, and the Italian Delegate from hence, are to meet on Thursday morning at Widdin, had I not better instruct him to proceed thither, and if his instructions are at Belgrade they might be sent to meet him at Baziasch.

Doc. 315

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 5, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Most Confidential and Secret.)

Vienna, November 5, 1876, 5.45 P.M.

WITH reference to my preceding telegram of this day on the subject of the Conference, it appears to me that Count Andrassy is apprehensive lest Her Majesty's Government may be disposed to make concessions to Russia on the point of autonomy to be given to Turkish provinces. He said he feared little resistance to Russian views is to be expected from the other Powers, and that unless Austria is supported by England she would stand alone, and proposals would be made to the Porte which it could not accept, and war would be inevitable.

He has been alarmed by reports which have reached him from Berlin of the confidence which Her Majesty's Government are said to place on the views of Russia in consequence of the assurances given by the Emperor of Russia to Lord A. Loftus, as he said the Emperor has been giving similar assurances for the last year, but Prince Gortchakow has been acting in direct opposition to the declared policy of His Majesty, and, in his Excellency's opinion, if such institutions are given to Turkish provinces as his Highness, it is believed, will advocate, a declaration to maintain independence and integrity of the Ottoman Empire will be entirely nugatory.

When Count Andrassy has read note which I have just addressed to him, he may be reassured on this subject; but the telegrams which he had received before my interview with him (? had alarmed him), and he seemed to think that too great precautions could not be taken against the risk "des surprises" in the proposed Conference.

Doc. 316 *Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 5, at night.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, November 5, 1876, 9.30 P.M.

I HAVE communicated to the Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Monson's telegram about the fortress of Sputz continuing to fire upon the Montenegrin positions, and his Excellency promised that the orders to Dervish Pasha to suspend all hostilities should be repeated immediately. The first orders were sent from here on Wednesday afternoon, and it is not certain when they may have reached Sputz.

Doc. 317

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 5, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Private and Confidential.)

Vienna, November 5, 1876, 11 P.M.

I THINK it right to state, with reference to an observation in my telegram of this day, marked Secret, that note to Minister for Foreign Affairs was drawn up in strict conformity with your Lordship's instructions; and his Excellency, when expressing distrust of Russia, said Prince Gortchakow has been announcing that he does not intend to be "magyarised" in the Conference.

Doc. 318

Consul Reade to Sir H. Elliot.

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Rustchuk, October 25, 1876.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that on Wednesday last I was told that, from the way in which the Mussulmans were openly talking in the cafés, an attack on the Christians was expected on the day after the Bairam, that is, on Sunday last.

Although I thought that this was one of the usual panics, still I next day got a person to see some of the leading Mussulmans here, so as to ascertain if there was any truth in the report made to me.

It appears that the Mussulmans have talked—and are still talking—but in the following sense:—

That having heard of an intention on the part of Russia to enter Turkey, they (the Mussulmans) are determined that if a single Russian regiment makes its appearance on the other side of the Danube alone, to massacre every Christian in the interior, if they cannot do the same on the banks of the Danube.

That this will take place, if the Russians make their appearance, no one who knows the country for a moment doubts, the more so as the Mussulmans are convinced that the Russians will only come here to drive them out of Europe, and they say, "in that case what have we to live for?" To offer the excuse of a temporary occupation will not be of the slightest avail.

I also hear that they are very well aware of the "speeches and writings" in England, advocating their expulsion from Europe, and these have only inflamed them the more.

Under these circumstances the knowledge that there are so few troops in this Vilayet is by no means reassuring to the Christians here, many of whom, I hear, are already prepared to leave at a moment's notice.

I am constantly seeing the Governor-General, and have induced him to take quietly every precaution that is necessary and possible without giving cause for a panic.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. READE.

Doc. 319 *Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received November 6.)

(No. 484. Secret.)

My Lord,

Berlin, November 3, 1876.

IN my previous correspondence I stated that Field Marshal Baron Manteuffel, on returning from his mission to Russia, had warned the Emperor and Prince Bismarck that England and Russia were growing too intimate, in his opinion, and that if France were to join them, other Powers might follow, and Germany would be isolated. Russia could be reckoned on when other Powers could not, and was too old and valuable and tried a friend to be neglected for new ones.

Various circumstances appear to have contributed towards awakening the suspicion in Prince Bismarck's mind that Baron Manteuffel was right, and that England and Russia understood each other better than he liked. Their mutual endeavours to settle the Christian question in Turkey, contrary to his calculations, seemed to bring them together, and to promote relations he could not quite account for without suspicion. But when the German Chargé d'Affaires at St. Petersburg telegraphed that Her Majesty's Ambassador was going to Livadia, Prince Bismarck concluded that it was high time to send General von Schweinitz after him.

Lord Augustus Loftus will have reported to your Lordship what his German colleague was instructed to say to the Russian Chancellor; all we know here is that it has produced a letter from the Czar, which General von Werder has been charged to bring to the German Emperor at Berlin.

It is well known that when Prince Bismarck has an object in view, he never hesitates to modify or alter his tactics until it is attained.

Now, in regard to the Eastern complication, he took it for granted that the common interests of England and Austria in Turkey would unite them against Russia, and that, by joining them, he would have the casting vote in his power.

Subsequent events not having justified his expectations, and seeing that Russia supports the advice of England at Constantinople, and has acquired the position he wanted Austria to hold, he thinks it prudent to drop Austria and turn to Russia, so as to find himself at the end, as he now thinks, on the winning side.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 320 Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 6.)
(No. 409.)

My Lord,

Rome, November 3, 1876.

I HAD the honour to receive this morning your Lordship's despatch No. 515 of the 27th of October, relative to a telegram from Signor Melegari to the Italian Ambassador in London, giving the substance of a conversation between Signor Melegari and me on the question of the exclusion of a Turkish Representative from a Conference.

I was certainly under the impression that I had correctly represented Signor Melegari's views on this subject when I reported in my despatch No. 405 of the 25th ultimo that his Excellency would consider that the exclusion of a Turkish Representative from any Conference, which might be assembled to discuss the affairs of the provinces and the conditions of peace with the Principalities, would be an act of injustice, and contrary to the spirit of the Treaty of Paris; but I now find, by a conversation I have just had with his Excellency, that I was mistaken in attaching so general a sense to Signor Melegari's objection to the exclusion of a Turkish Representative, and that his Excellency "although of opinion that it would be desirable that a Representative of Turkey should not be excluded from a Conference assembled to discuss the interests of that country, considers, nevertheless, that it is only in the event of a Conference being convoked in virtue of Article VIII of the Treaty of Paris that it would not be possible to exclude a Representative of Turkey."

The words between inverted commas I wrote down at his Excellency's table, and having read them over to him, he said they were correct.

In speaking of the negotiations for peace, his Excellency gave me to understand that he would be ready to urge both Russia and the Porte to act in a spirit of conciliation, and he attached great importance to the influence which Her Majesty's Government might exercise over both Powers in this sense.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

Doc. 321 Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 6.)

(Telegraphic.)

Rome, November 6, 1876, 5.30 P.M.

THE Italian Government accepts in principle the proposal of Her Majesty's Government for a Conference at Constantinople.

Official reply in writing to-morrow.

Doc. 322 Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 6.)

(Telegraphic.)

Berlin, November 6, 1876.

I HAVE communicated the proposal of Her Majesty's Government for a Conference to the German Government, as instructed by your Lordship's telegram of the 4th instant.

German Minister for Foreign Affairs has submitted it to the Emperor and to the Chancellor. His Excellency will instruct German Ambassador at Constantinople to attend

preliminary discussions, and sees no objection to appointment of second Plenipotentiary if necessary.

Doc. 323 *Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received November 6.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Most Confidential.)

Berlin, November 6, 1876.

M. BULOW is anxious to be confidentially informed whether your Lordship thinks the limitations of the armistice should admit of the Turks keeping their present positions on Servian territory or not?

Prince Bismarck thinks the Turks should recross the frontier, and evacuate Servian territory, on the principle *statu quo ante bellum* during armistice. This is also the Russian view.

Doc. 324

Memorandum communicated to the Earl of Derby by Count Schouvaloff, November 6, 1876.

NOUS acceptons la proposition Anglaise d'une Conférence, mais pensons que pour les discussions préalables la présence du second Plénipotentiaire n'est que facultative et dépendra de chacune des Puissances.

Doc. 325

Memorandum communicated to the Earl of Derby by Count Schouvaloff, November 6, 1876.

LA Russie désire la réunion d'une Conférence et l'envisage comme le moyen le plus propre pour arriver, dans un accord de toutes les Puissances, à conclure la paix et à assurer le sort des populations Chrétiennes.

Les paroles dites par le Prince Gortchakow à Lord A. Loftus ne tendaient pas à entraver la liberté de la discussion entre les Plénipotentiaires ni à créer des obstacles à la réunion d'une Conférence.

Le Chancelier Prince Gortchakow réitérait à Lord A. Loftus ce que la Russie n'a cessé d'affirmer depuis le mois de Juin.

Elle recherche la prospérité des populations de la Bosnie, de l'Herzégovine et de Bulgarie, au moyen d'institutions d'autonomies locales et administratives qu'elle voudrait réelles et efficaces.

Doc. 326

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 734.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 6, 1876.

SIR A. BUCHANAN reports in his telegram of the 5th instant, which has been forwarded to your Excellency, that Count Andrassy has reason to fear that difficulties may be raised as to the principle on which the delimitation for the armistice is to be carried out.

I have to request that you will inform me by telegraph what are the precise terms of the armistice.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 327

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.

(No. 686.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, November 6, 1876.

I HAVE received a telegram to-day from your Excellency, in which you state that Prince Bismarck thinks that the Turkish forces should recross the frontier and evacuate the territory of Servia on the principle that, during the armistice, the *status quo ante bellum* should be maintained. You add that this is also the Russian view, and you report that

Herr von Bülow is anxious to be informed, confidentially, whether I am of opinion that the delimitation of the armistice should admit of the maintenance by the Turks of the positions now occupied by them on Servian territory.

I have to direct your Excellency to state to Herr von Bülow, as the reply to this inquiry, that Her Majesty's Government consider that the Servians can have no claim to the *status quo ante bellum* till peace is concluded; and that they are of opinion that the respective armies ought, during the armistice, to retain their present positions.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 328
(No. 478.)
Sir,

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

Foreign Office, November 6, 1876.

I LEARN from your Excellency's telegram of this day that Mr. Monson had telegraphed that he considered his presence at Cettigné no longer necessary, as the Austrian and Italian Agents were on the point of leaving, and the rendezvous of the foreign delegates had been fixed at Ragusa, but that you had desired him to await orders on the subject as you had reason to believe, from Count Andrassy's language, that there might be a diplomatic discussion as to the principle on which the delimitation under the armistice would be based.

I approve your action in the matter, as I am of opinion that, until the question of the basis of the delimitation is settled, Mr. Monson's presence in Montenegro might be useful; but, as he appears to fear that his health may suffer from delay in his departure, I think it best to leave you to exercise your discretion as to his recall.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 329 *Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 7.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Yalta, November 6, 1876, 8 P.M.

I SAW Prince Gortchakow this morning. He agrees to your Lordship's proposals and bases for Conference, with the omission of the word "territorial" preceding "integrity of Ottoman Empire."

His Highness observed that he could not accept that term, as it would exclude possibility of an occupation, which he considers will be still necessary as a guarantee for the security of Christian population and for execution of reforms. This occupation should bear European character, as in the case of Syria, mentioned in the Protocol referred to by your Lordship in 1860, and it might be entrusted to Russia and Austria, acting in the name of Europe. Prince Gortchakow also stated that excesses were still being perpetrated in Bulgaria, and that if they continue, material force would be necessary to maintain order, but he distinctly stated that Russia would not take an inch of territory.

Doc. 330 *Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 7.)*

(Telegraphic.)

(Very Confidential.)

Yalta, November 6, 1876, 11 P.M.

EMPEROR told me yesterday that he had received a telegram from General Tcherniaeff, requesting permission to wait on His Majesty here, and that he had declined to receive him.

I am told, from a good source, that the Sultan is turning to Russia for protection and support, and it is rumoured that the Grand Vizier and the Minister for Foreign Affairs had expressed a wish to come to the Crimea to ask the Emperor to save the Ottoman Empire, but that it was declined.

I hear that, at the private audience of General Ignatiew, the Sultan asked for his support against his present Ministers.

Doc. 331 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 7.)

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, November 6, 1876, 10.20 P.M.

I AM assured that the steamers of the Russian Black Sea Company are not allowed to run from here on any of the lines except to Odessa.

The steamer to Syria and Egypt, which should have sailed on Saturday, was stopped by order of General Ignatiew, and discharged her cargo and returned the freights paid.

Doc. 332

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, November 7, 1876, 2.15 P.M.

HER Majesty's Government approve your advice to the Porte not to send a fleet into the Black Sea, as reported in your telegram of the 5th instant.

Doc. 333 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 7.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, November 7, 1876, 4.15 P.M.

I LEARN here confidentially that Prince of Montenegro will probably propose that the Delegates of England, Italy, and Austro-Hungary should (draw ?) up the line of demarcation on the side of Herzegovina, and those of France, Russia and Germany (if a German is appointed) on the Albanian frontier.

His Highness will probably claim on the side of the Herzegovina a line from Klobuk through Bilek to Fotscha, and on the Albanian frontier from the confluence of the Murta and Moruscha all the plateaus of Kutschi and Drekolovitz, leaving the plain of Moroecha to be occupied by the Turks. He pretends that no Turkish troops hold the country within these limits. Moukhtar Pasha is believed here to have retired from Zaslup to Trebigné

Doc. 334

The Earl of Derby to Consul-General White.

(No. 37. Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 7, 1876.

THE Russians in Servia are said to commit great excesses, and to be guilty of much licentiousness.

I have to instruct you to report to me as to the truth of these statements; and, in the event of their being correct, to inform me of any cases which you can ascertain to be well authenticated.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 335

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 570.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, November 7, 1876.

I HAVE received your telegram of the 5th instant, and I have to point to your Excellency that the expression "territorial integrity," to which it appears that the Russian Government make some objection, is taken from the Treaty of Paris.

Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that, from the nature of the relations existing between the Porte and Montenegro, this expression would not exclude any frontier arrangements with Montenegro which the Porte might be disposed to concede,

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 336

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 571. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, November 7, 1876.

THE Russian Ambassador called upon me to-day, and I mentioned to him the report which I had received by telegraph from your Excellency that Prince Gortchakow agreed to the bases for a Conference proposed by Her Majesty's Government with the omission of the word "territorial" preceding "integrity of the Ottoman Empire" in the first basis, on the ground that he could not accept that term as it determined the exclusion of the possibility of occupation which he considered still necessary.

His Excellency begged that I would suspend any action on this Report for twenty-four-hours. He said that he had himself received a similar message from Prince Gortchakoff, but that he had pointed out, in reply, what no doubt had been overlooked, that the words "territorial integrity" were a quotation from a Treaty; that "integrity," without the explanatory word "territorial," would, after all, be the same thing; and that, as Her Majesty's Government had already refused the idea of occupation, the renewal of the proposal as a preliminary in the basis for a Conference would certainly cause Her Majesty's Government to break off from the Conference altogether.

He requested me to understand that he had done this on his personal account, but he did not doubt that his representations would have due weight with his Government, and therefore trusted that Her Majesty's Government would wait at all events for the time he had mentioned, until he received the Prince's answer.

I said that I had listened to his Excellency with much satisfaction, and felt no difficulty in assenting to his request.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 337

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 484. Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 7, 1876.

COUNT BEUST informed to-day, that Count Andrassy had stated to him by telegraph, that he had no objection to the programme for the deliberations of the Conference which had been communicated to him as the suggestion of Her Majesty's Government, but had directed him to make the following observations to me in the strictest confidence.

By the conditions as to the territorial integrity of Turkey, any question as to the "amputation" of the Turkish Empire was excluded. But if the British Government, as had been repeatedly asserted by Count Beust in his telegrams, only looked upon their proposals relating to autonomy as the basis for discussion, then, Count Andrassy observed, it did not appear clear to him whether the same resistance as would be opposed to dismemberment would be made to a state of things acting as a process of slow poisoning or chemical disintegration. The Austro-Hungarian Government were determined, if Her Majesty's Government took up the same position with them, not to go further in regard of the question of autonomy than the original propositions of England; but if the Cabinet of St. James were inclined to go further, nothing would be left to Austria-Hungary but to look exclusively to her own special interests in the way best calculated to protect them.

As regards the suggestion of a second Plenipotentiary, Count Andrassy stated that he had no objection to offer, but that it was his wish that too much stress should not be laid on the high position of the Ambassadors. Under no circumstances would the Austro-Hungarian Government allow their Plenipotentiaries to do more in important questions than take them *ad referendum*, as it seemed to them hardly possible to reconcile the grant of absolute full powers with Parliamentary institutions.

I replied that the Austria-Hungarian Government might be assured that Her Majesty's Government adhered to their proposals respecting autonomy, and would not depart from them in a Conference.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 338 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 9.)

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, November 8, 1876.

WITH reference to Prince Gortchakow's suggestion about the attendance of Second Plenipotentiaries at the preliminary discussions, I would submit that the moment when their presence may be most beneficial will be precisely when the measures to be adopted are being discussed.

The presence of a British Cabinet Minister would have weight with some of the Representatives much under the influence of General Ignatiev.

Doc. 339 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 9.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, November 9, 1876, 11:40 A.M.

THERE is, I believe, no truth in the report mentioned by Lord A. Loftus of the Grand Vizier and Minister for Foreign Affairs having proposed to go to the Crimea to appeal directly to the Emperor of Russia.

On the other hand, the Turkish public consider the proposals for a Conference and for the autonomy of Provinces as most injurious to their interests; and they are told by the Russians that they both originated with Her Majesty's Government.

This has produced a mischievous effect, and people are beginning to ask whether, if Great Britain has turned against Turkey, it might not be best to throw themselves into the arms of Russia, and trust to the magnanimity of the Emperor. None, at least, of the principal Ministers adopt this view.

Doc. 340

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, November 9, 1876, 3:45 P.M.

INFORM Consuls Holmes and Blunt, and any other Consuls of experience whom it may be desirable to consult, that they will probably be required to meet Lord Salisbury at Constantinople.

Doc. 341

The Earl of Derby to Consul-General White.

(No. 41.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 9, 1876.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 188, Political, of the 19th ultimo, in which you inform me that, in view of the instructions received by the Russian Agent at Belgrade from his Government, you had deemed it better to abstain from urging the Prince of Serbia to accept the armistice of five months proposed by the Porte; and, in reply, I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government approve your conduct in this matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 342

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 9, at night.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, November 9, 1876.

PORTE'S answer to the invitation to the Conference has been delayed by a telegram from Musurus Pasha reporting a conversation with your Lordship, in which he stated the objection felt to it by his Government and asked for information on certain points. Ambassador said that your Lordship, after giving some explanations, added, "We must see what your Government will say."

They have therefore sent fresh instructions to Musurus Pasha, and wait for his answer, after communicating them to your Lordship, before they reply to the invitation, but they will certainly end by accepting.

* Repeated to Embassies.

Doc. 343 Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 10.)

(No. 492. Most Confidential.)

My Lord,

Berlin, November 6, 1876.

HERR VON BULOW told me to-day that he was anxious to be confidentially informed whether your Lordship thinks that the limitation of the armistice should admit of the Turks keeping their present position on Servian territory or not.

Prince Bismarck, he said, was of opinion that on the principle of the *status quo ante bellum* the Turks should recross the frontier and evacuate Servian territory during the armistice—an opinion which was also shared by the Russian Government.

Field-Marshal Count Moltke had been asked to select officers to act with the military agents appointed for the settlement of the armistice, and it was essential to know, before drawing up their instructions, what the views of Her Majesty's Government were as to the respective position the two armies should be advised to occupy.

The Emperor of Russia is afraid that the Turks will commit further atrocities if allowed to remain in Servia, and Prince Bismarck thinks it would be as well to guard against such a calamity by advising them to evacuate their present positions.

I have been told on good authority that this is also the opinion of the German Emperor.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 344 Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 10.)

(No. 499.)

My Lord,

Berlin, November 6, 1876.

I COMMUNICATED the substance of your Lordship's telegram of the 4th instant, conveying the proposal of Her Majesty's Government for a Conference to be held forthwith at Constantinople, to the German Minister for Foreign Affairs, to be submitted to the Emperor and forwarded to Prince Bismarck at Varzin.

His Excellency said that there could be no objection on the part of the German Government to the appointment of a second Plenipotentiary if necessary, and that meanwhile instructions would be sent to the German Ambassador at Constantinople to attend the proposed preliminary discussions.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 345

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, November 10.)

(Télégraphique.)

Constantinople, le 8 Novembre, 1876.

SON Excellence l'Ambassadeur d'Angleterre m'a communiqué le télégramme de son Excellence Lord Derby concernant la réunion à Constantinople d'une Conférence qui prendrait pour bases de ses délibérations:—

1. L'indépendance et l'intégrité de l'Empire.
2. La renonciation des Puissances médiatrices à tout avantage exclusif.
3. Les termes de pacification proposés dans son télégramme du 21 Septembre, et qui portent le retour au *statu quo ante* pour la Serbie et le Monténégro, et l'établissement d'une autonomie administrative et locale pour certaines autres parties de l'Empire.

Nous sommes on ne peut plus reconnaissants de la sollicitude de sa Seigneurie pour mettre un terme aux embarras de la situation actuelle; nous apprécions la haute valeur des vues de son Excellence; seulement nous nous demandons si, en adhérant à un pareil programme, le Gouvernement Impérial ne se trouvera pas immédiatement entraîné sur un terrain des plus désavantageux pour lui. Le Gouvernement Impérial, en ce moment, est en train de procéder à la mise en exécution et à l'application des nouvelles institutions. Il comprend les exigences de la situation et les signes des temps; il a hâte de faire voir par les faits qu'il poursuit une œuvre de rénovation sérieuse et radicale. Est-ce le moment pour lui de s'engager dans une discussion concernant des autonomies locales? Un pareil principe aurait pour conséquence inévitable de faire avorter les réformes en cours, de détruire par là le prestige de l'autorité, de créer des inégalités choquantes, de soulever

dans la pratique des difficultés insurmontables, de garantir une prime aux mouvements insurrectionnels, de faire prendre à la crise un caractère permanent, de constituer en un mot un état de choses qui serait une menace perpétuelle pour la paix de l'Empire et de l'Europe. Indépendamment de ce qui pourrait être dit au sujet des autonomies, la Sublime Porte ne peut se dissimuler la grave atteinte qui serait portée au principe même de l'indépendance de l'Empire, si les affaires intérieures devenaient l'objet des délibérations d'une Conférence internationale. Comment pourrait-elle se résigner à renverser de ses propres mains, en participant à une Conférence ayant pour objet de régler les affaires intérieures de l'Empire, la plus forte barrière que l'Empire puisse mettre aujourd'hui entre lui et ses adversaires ? Une fois l'œuvre du Traité de Paris mise de côté, on se trouverait à la merci des événements. Tandis qu'une attaque contre l'Empire constituerait aujourd'hui la violation d'un Traité solennel et un pur acte d'aggression, cette attaque, dans le cas où la Conférence n'aboutirait pas, se présenterait comme le résultat inévitable des divergences survenues dans le courant de discussions dont la Sublime Porte aurait admis le principe. Soit donc que la Conférence proposée aboutisse, soit qu'elle n'aboutisse pas, le Gouvernement Impérial n'en sortirait pas moins amoindri dans son indépendance ou bien dans les moyens de défense que lui assurent aujourd'hui des engagements internationaux.

Son Excellence Lord Derby, en prenant connaissance des considérations qui précèdent, et qui résument la pensée intime du Gouvernement Impérial, saura discerner, nous n'en doutons pas, la vraie situation de la Sublime Porte.

Nous sommes prêts à faire tout ce qui dépendra de nous pour ramener un moment plus tôt l'ère de la paix et de la tranquillité. Mais la réunion d'une Conférence serait de trop grand inconvénient pour qu'il ne nous soit pas permis de désirer que le Cabinet Britannique veuille bien consentir à ce que l'entente désirée soit obtenue sans la réunion de Plénipotentiaires étrangers ayant pour mission d'engager une discussion sur l'administration intérieure de l'Empire.

Veuillez bien donner lecture à Lord Derby du présent télégramme.

Doc. 346 Consul Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 10.)

(Telegraphic.)

Scutari, November 9, 1876.

PORTE has ordered fifteen battalions to be dispatched from Podgoritza to Antivari, to be embarked for Constantinople on transports already on their way to Albania.

Small garrisons will be left in the forts on the Montenegrin southern frontier, and I am told other battalions are to be brought from Podgoritza to winter quarters in Scutari.

Doc. 347

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 754.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 10, 1876.

YOUR telegram of the 8th instant has been received, and, in reply, I have to inform your Excellency that Her Majesty's Government cannot authorize any preliminary discussions before Lord Salisbury arrives at Constantinople, and until the bases of the Conference are settled.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 348

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, November 10, 1876, 4.45 P.M.

THE Russian Embassy informs me that a telegram has been received from Prince Gortchakow, stating that the Imperial Government accept as it stands ("tel quel") the programme proposed by the Cabinet of London for the meeting of the Conference.

M. l'Ambassadeur,

Foreign Office, November 11, 1876.

HER Majesty's Government have had under their consideration the telegraphic despatch from the Ottoman Minister for Foreign Affairs which your Excellency was so good as to communicate to me yesterday afternoon.

Her Majesty's Government understand from that despatch and from the explanations with which your Excellency accompanied its communication, that the Porte's objections to a Conference are as follows:—

That the expression "local autonomy" used in the proposed basis for a Conference is not employed in any Treaty, is unknown to diplomacy, is vague and elastic in meaning, and may be construed as implying the concession to the provinces to which it is applied of a position of quasi-independence like that enjoyed by Servia and Roumania;

That it would be very impolitic to give special advantages to Bosnia, the Herzegovina, and Bulgaria, inasmuch as a distinction made in favour of those provinces would afford good ground of complaint from the other province of the Empire which have remained loyal, and would be, in fact, a premium on insurrection;

That new institutions and reforms for the whole Empire having been proclaimed by the Sultan, it would be inexpedient to interfere with their operation by the discussion of fresh measures of administration for these particular provinces;

And, lastly, that it is contrary to Treaty obligations and to international usage for the Powers to assemble in Conference to discuss the internal administration of the Turkish Empire.

I have now the honour to state to your Excellency the observations which occur to Her Majesty's Government in regard to the several objections taken by the Porte to the proposal for a Conference which Her Majesty's Government have submitted to the Porte and to the Powers.

Her Majesty's Government understand and appreciate the feelings with which the Porte may regard that proposal, but I must remind your Excellency that under the circumstances of the situation there was no alternative open. The conditions of peace which Her Majesty's Government had agreed upon with the other Governments and recommended for the acceptance of the Porte, not having been accepted by the Turkish Government, the Russian Government proposed the occupation of Bosnia by an Austrian, and of Bulgaria by a Russian force, and the entry of the allied fleets into the Bosphorus. Her Majesty's Government intimated that they were unable to concur in these measures, and it became evident that, unless some suggestion were made which would meet with general concurrence, serious complications might ensue. Her Majesty's Government then reverted to the proposal for an armistice which they had made some time previously, to be followed by a Conference, as the only means remaining which afforded a prospect of arriving at a general agreement.

Her Majesty's Government feel confident that the Porte must be sensible of the necessity of such an agreement being attained, and of the hopelessness of expecting that, without concert with the Powers, a satisfactory settlement of existing differences can be brought about.

Her Majesty's Government cannot admit that, in the basis for a Conference which they have advanced, there is anything contrary to the Treaty obligations subsisting between the Powers and the Porte, or that the Powers are precluded by Treaty from assembling in Conference to discuss the pacification of the Turkish provinces and the measures of administrative reform best adapted for that purpose. I need scarcely remind your Excellency that Conferences were held for a similar object in 1860 and 1867. Moreover, communications have been proceeding among the Powers for the last two years, and the Porte both itself accepted, and urged on the acceptance of Her Majesty's Government, the note of Count Andrassy. There can, therefore, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, be no question that the Powers have the right to discuss matters relating to the internal administration of the Ottoman Empire under circumstances like those which have occasioned the present proposal for a Conference.

I have also the honour to point out to your Excellency that both in the telegraphic despatch which your Excellency has communicated to me, and in your Excellency's own observations, the definition given to the expression "autonomy"

has been overlooked. Her Majesty's Government have expressly guarded themselves against any proposal for the grant of institutions to these provinces similar to those of Roumania and Servia.

In the basis for a Conference it is distinctly stated that by "local or administrative autonomy" is "to be understood a system of local institutions, which shall give the population some control over their own local affairs and guarantees against the exercise of arbitrary authority. There is to be no question of the creation of a tributary State."

Her Majesty's Government are disposed to agree with the Porte that administrative reforms, which may be desirable for one part of the Empire, can scarcely be withheld from the rest of it; but they cannot regard this as a reason for not entering upon a Conference to determine what reforms are now required to ensure the pacification of the disturbed provinces.

If the Conference succeeds in agreeing upon a scheme of administration which may have that effect and be otherwise advantageous, it would of course be open to the Porte, and would seem desirable, to extend it, as far as might be applicable, to other provinces; but the immediate necessity which has to be met is to restore order and tranquillity in Bosnia and Herzegovina, repair and redress the injuries to which the population of Bulgaria have been subjected, and punish the perpetrators. The Imperial Hatt proclaiming the new reforms for the Empire will doubtless receive the amplest consideration from the Plenipotentiaries of the Powers when assembled at Constantinople; and due weight will, no doubt, be given to the manifest utility of adapting any new schemes of administration to the existing institutions of the country, so far as they may be efficient; but Her Majesty's Government regret that they cannot accept the Proclamation of these reforms as in itself sufficient; nor, were they disposed to do so, would there be any probability of the other Powers assenting to such a course.

Since, therefore, concert among the Powers is imperative, and the only means left of arriving at it is by a Conference, Her Majesty's Government trust that the Porte will no longer hesitate to join the other Powers in a prompt acceptance of the Conference on the basis which Her Majesty's Government have proposed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 350

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 16, at night.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, November 16, 1876, 6.15 P.M.

OFFICIAL answer to the invitation to the Conference will not be given till Saturday afternoon, as a Grand Council has to pronounce upon it.

There is, however, no doubt of its acceptance.

Doc. 351

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 17.)

(No. 1209. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Therapia, October 28, 1876.

THE late equivocal policy of the Italian Government appears to be the result of a deep-seated distrust of Austria which has for some time been visible.

The Turkish Minister at Rome informed the Porte that the Italian Government suspected that of Austria of a project of occupying Bosnia with a view to its ultimate annexation, which would be injurious to Italian interests, and the Italian Minister here received instructions to speak in the same sense to Safvet Pasha.

If I am not misinformed, M. Melegari has shown a feverish apprehension of designs on the part of Austria, for which there was no ground, and the recent talk of the claim of Italy upon the Tyrol may probably be traced to this cause.

I have further good reason for believing that M. Nigra has been personally very desirous that his Government should enter into an understanding with the Russian Cabinet by which, in the event of a rupture of the latter with Austria, it should support the pretensions of Italy on the Trentino.

The language of General Ignatiev favours the supposition that the understanding of his Government with Italy is perfect, and that they can count upon her voice in any difference that may arise with other Powers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Doc. 352 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 17.)
(No. 1213.)

My Lord,

Therapia, October 30, 1876.

AT a meeting of the Representatives of the Guaranteeing Powers, General Ignatiev informed us of the progress of the negotiations between himself and the Porte for the conclusion of an armistice, and he communicated to us the project, of which a copy is herewith inclosed, which had been drawn up, with some modifications, from a form which he had himself suggested.

If his draft had been adopted exactly as he had given it, the question would, he said, have been settled; but he could not agree to some of the alterations introduced by the Porte, and he had marked on the margin of the paper he had given us the modifications that he must require.

The first of these is the exclusion of the words "Servia and Montenegro" after the mention of the theatre of hostilities to which the armistice is to apply; and I, in common with all my colleagues, considered the omission asked for by the Russian Ambassador to be desirable.

The second change required by General Ignatiev deprives the arrangement, as your Lordship will see from the inclosure, of the absolute character of the prolongation to be given to the armistice at the expiration of the first term if the negotiations for peace should not then be concluded.

Although the distinction is far from unimportant, I feel so little doubt of the Porte's acceptance of General Ignatiev's formula, that I considered myself justified in telegraphing to your Lordship that the arrangement had very nearly been come to.

Shortly after I had sent my telegram, General Ignatiev sent to say that there had been an inaccuracy in the version he had given to us of the amendment that he had proposed to the Porte, which ought to have been as marked in the inclosure as "corrected version."

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Doc. 353

Inclosure in Doc. 352.

Porte's Project for an Armistice.

General Ignatiev's Modifications.

UNE longue incertitude étant nuisible aux intérêts commerciaux, industriels et financiers de toute l'Europe et préjudiciable à la prompte conclusion d'une paix durable que toutes les Puissances désirent, un armistice est conclu à dater du sur tout le théâtre [de la guerre en Serbie et ou Monténégro], et cet armistice durera jusqu'au Décembre.

des hostilités,

A la suite de cette décision des délégués seront nommés de la part des Puissances Médiatrices, et envoyés immédiatement sur les lieux pour procéder aux opérations de démarcation.

Si, contre toute attente, une paix durable n'était pas conclue jusqu'à l'expiration du délai ci-dessus indiqué, la durée de l'armistice [sera prolongée de six autres semaines sans que dans l'intervalle

pourrait être prolongée selon les nécessités de la négociation, et l'accord qui

Original Version.

aucune des deux parties puisse se permettre de reprendre les hostilités.

A l'expiration de ce second délai l'armistice sera prolongé de deux mois à moins que les Puissances Médiatrices décident entre elles la reprise des hostilités].

interviendrait entre la Sublime Porte et les Puissances garantes.

Corrected Version.

pourrait être prolongée si la marche des négociations en démontrait la nécessité.

Doc. 354 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 17.)

(No. 1214. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Therapia, October 31, 1876.

I HAVE the honour to inclose a confidential report from Mr. Sandison of the account given by Safvet Pasha of what passed at General Ignatiev's private audience of the Sultan.

I would draw your Lordship's attention to the assurance given by the Ambassador that he was not the bearer of an ultimatum from his Government.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Doc. 355

Inclosure in Doc. 354.

Mr. Sandison to Sir H. Elliot.

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Therapia, October 29, 1876.

SAFVET PASHA gave me to-day an account of General Ignatiev's audience of the Sultan.

His Majesty began the conversation by telling his Excellency that he felt perhaps more anxious than anybody to see the immediate conclusion of peace in order that he might direct his special attention to the reforms and other domestic matters which it was hoped would largely contribute to the general welfare of his subjects.

The General said, in reply, that all the Powers wished sincerely for peace, and that this was the principal reason which had induced the Emperor to urge for an armistice of six weeks' duration as being most calculated to lead to that result. Russia, he went on to say, was greatly interested in the re-establishment of peace in the Sultan's dominions inasmuch as the effect of the present troubles recoiled upon Russia, who was sincerely anxious for the prosperity of the Ottoman Empire and for the establishment of friendly relations proper to neighbouring States. The Sultan answered much in the same language, expressing the hope that the conclusion of peace will strengthen more than ever the ties of friendship which have hitherto existed between Russia and Turkey; in reply to which the General said he now felt satisfied that such a good understanding would also lead to mutual confidence in the good intentions of the two countries.

The General's idea, Safvet Pasha observed, in thus alluding to "mutual confidence," and in saying that Russia would do all in her power in order to bring about the conclusion of peace, was to make the Sultan place full reliance upon her exertions for the cessation of hostilities by means of the six weeks' armistice.

Before taking leave of the Sultan General Ignatiev begged to assure His Majesty that he was not, as rumour said, the bearer of an ultimatum, the object aimed at by his Government being but peace and the tranquillity of Turkey.

(Signed) A. SANDISON.

Doc. 356

Safvet Pasha to General Ignatiev.

Le 1 Novembre, 1876.

LE Soussigné, Ministre des Affaires Etrangères de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, a eu l'honneur de recevoir la note que Son Excellence M. l'Ambassadeur de Sa Majesté l'Empereur de toutes les Russies a bien voulu lui adresser en date du 31 Octobre.

Le Soussigné se fait un devoir empressé de déclarer avant tout que la Sublime Porte attache toujours le plus grand prix au maintien et à la consolidation des

relations amicales qui existent si heureusement entre les deux Empires voisins, et qu'elle ne saurait avoir rien de plus à cœur que d'éviter tout ce qui serait de nature à y porter atteinte.

Le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan déplore plus que personne les calamités de la guerre et l'effusion de sang. Il a cru donner une preuve de ses dispositions sincèrement pacifiques en proposant d'assigner en Serbie et au Monténégro un délai d'une longue durée à l'armistice désiré. Toutefois pour donner une nouvelle preuve de ses sentiments de conciliation et de sa déférence aux vœux exprimés par le Cabinet Impérial de St. Pétersbourg, comme par les autres Grandes Puissances, la Sublime Porte consent à la conclusion d'un armistice pur et simple de deux mois à partir d'aujourd'hui même. Elle vient en conséquence de transmettre des ordres aux Commandants des troupes Impériales pour arrêter immédiatement les opérations militaires sur tout le théâtre de la guerre. Pour ce qui est des détails relatifs à cet armistice le Soussigné se réserve de les régler plus tard d'accord avec votre Excellence et avec MM. les Représentants des autres Grandes Puissances Médiatrices.

En ayant l'honneur de porter ce qui précède à la connaissance de Son Excellence M. l'Ambassadeur de Sa Majesté l'Empereur de toutes les Russies, le Soussigné saisit, &c.

Doc. 357 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 17.)

(No. 1243. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, November 6, 1876.

UPON General Ignatiev's arrival here from Livadia the Sultan sent one of the officials of the Palace to congratulate him on his return.

The Ambassador, in expressing his acknowledgments for this message, alluded to the difficulties in which His Majesty found himself, declaring them to be in no way of Russian creation, but produced entirely by Great Britain.

His Government had never thought of asking for autonomy for the insurgent provinces, but the proposal had been made by Her Majesty's Government; and the hopes of the people having been raised, Russia could not now allow them to be disappointed.

Other insinuations in the same strain were made against England, which was represented in the most unfriendly light, while Russia was sincerely desirous of the welfare of the Empire.

I am in a position to guarantee to your Lordship the accuracy of this report.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Doc. 358 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 17.)

(No. 1251. Very Confidential.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, November 7, 1876.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith the copy of the letter which the Sultan addressed to the Emperor of Russia upon receiving His Imperial Majesty's reply to the notification of his accession to the Throne, and which has been communicated to me by Safvet Pasha, with the request that it might be considered strictly confidential.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Doc. 359

Inclosure in Doc. 358.

Letter addressed by His Majesty the Sultan to the Emperor of Russia.

Majestueux, Glorieux, Puissant, et Magnanime Empereur de toutes les Russies, notre ami sincère :

M. l'Aide-de-camp Général Ignatiev m'a remis hier la lettre de votre Majesté en réponse à ma notification relative à mon avènement au Trône de mes ancêtres.

C'est avec une satisfaction toute particulière que j'ai relevé de son contenu les bonnes dispositions de votre Majesté pour le maintien de nos rapports d'amitié, dispositions qui correspondent entièrement aux miennes. J'ai été également sensible de voir votre Majesté reconnaître la gravité des circonstances au milieu desquelles j'inaugure mon règne et je compte sur sa précieuse amitié afin de pouvoir atteindre le but de mes efforts constants pour apaiser les esprits, et rétablir la sécurité et le bon ordre, malheureusement troublés avant mon avènement au Trône, dans quelques parties de l'Empire.

Le succès des efforts que je consacre dans ce but sera de beaucoup facilité par le concours amical de votre Majesté, qui voudra bien, j'en suis fermement convaincu, donner en cette circonstance une nouvelle preuve de ses sentiments bienveillants et de ses bonnes intentions à l'égard de mon Empire.

Je profite du retour du yacht Impérial "Livadia" pour assurer votre Majesté des vœux ardents que je forme pour son bonheur et pour la gloire de son règne, et je la prie de vouloir bien agréer les nouvelles assurances de ma grande considération et de ma très sincère amitié.

(Signé) ABDUL HAMID II.

Palais de Dolma-Baghtché, le 1^{er} 3/5 Octobre, 1876.

Doc. 360 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 17.)
(No. 1265.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, November 9, 1876.

ALTHOUGH, with a view to avoiding anything having the appearance of a menace against Russia, the Porte, upon my advice, decided not to send a squadron into the Black Sea, it is not without uneasiness about the possibility of a *coup de main* being attempted, by which a Russian force might be landed within a short distance of the capital, upon which it could march unopposed.

I have informed your Lordship that the whole of the ships belonging to the Black Sea Navigation Company are kept at home, and could be available at a moment's notice for the conveyance of a large army.

The Turkish ships of war, which were intended for the Black Sea, have been ordered to the Upper Bosphorus at Buyukdéré, or Beicos; but I understand that even this measure of ordinary precaution is represented at the Russian Embassy as an offensive demonstration.

General Ignatiev spoke to me yesterday of any military preparations which had been made by Russia having been caused by the threatening language of Admiral Hobart, and said that, having been asked by his Government when at Livadia whether he could engage that Turkey would not attack Russia, he had answered that he could guarantee nothing as long as such "filibusters" as Midhat Pasha and Admiral Hobart had any voice in public affairs.

I remarked that at the time he alluded to Admiral Hobart was on the coast of Crete without any one about him to whom he could hold threatening language, and that every one who knew anything of the situation of the country was aware how little it entered into the thoughts of the Porte to begin an attack upon Russia.

The attempt to represent Turkey as the aggressive party would be ludicrous if the case were not so serious.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Doc. 361 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 17.)

(No. 1266. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, November 10, 1876.

I HAVE the honour to inclose the copy of a memorandum upon the present military position of this country, drawn up by an officer who has good opportunities of being acquainted with it.

His views respecting the proper course to be adopted by Turkey in the event of an attack by Russia are not, however, approved by Colonel Baker, whose opinions are perhaps more valuable.

The Porte is, I understand, making every effort to complete its military preparations; and the new levy that has been ordered is expected to produce about 120,000 men.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Doc. 362

Inclosure in Doc. 361.

Memorandum respecting the present Military Condition of Turkey.

LA Turquie a actuellement près de 480 bataillons d'infanterie sous les armes, dont 315 opèrent contre la Serbie, le Monténégro et en Bosnie; 18 bataillons tiennent garnison en Epire et en Thessalie, 16 à Constantinople, 12 dans le reste de la Turquie d'Europe, 15 dans l'Ile de Crète, 4 dans la Province de Tripole de Barbarie, 12 en Syrie, 20 dans la Province de Yemen, 20 dans celle de Bagdad, et 48 dans le rayon du 4^{ème} corps d'armée qui renferme le théâtre de guerre éventuel en Asie.

Vu la dislocation de ces troupes et l'effectif faible des bataillons qui opèrent depuis des mois contre l'ennemi, la Turquie n'est pas actuellement dans l'état de pouvoir opposer des forces suffisantes à une invasion Russe, contre laquelle elle devrait, pour établir une résistance sérieuse et efficace, avoir à sa disposition une armée d'au moins 100,000 hommes bien commandés en Asie et une autre bien plus forte en Europe.

Le Gouvernement Turc, en prévoyance de complications graves, a donné il y a quelque temps l'ordre de faire une nouvelle levée parmi les redevables de service dans la réserve (Rédif) non appelés jusqu'à présent sous les armes, dans le but d'en former 150 nouveaux bataillons. Cette mesure a de graves inconvénients et ne servira pas à atteindre le but dans un court laps de temps, parce qu'il n'existe pas du tout des cadres pour ces nouveaux bataillons et que les individus appelés sous les armes n'ont presque tous pas servi antérieurement dans l'armée. Il se recommanderait plutôt de profiter de la nouvelle levée pour augmenter l'effectif des 400 bataillons se trouvant actuellement dans la Turquie d'Europe; amoindri généralement de beaucoup quant à tous les bataillons qui ont pris part à la guerre, et dans le rayon du 4^{ème} corps en Asie, jusqu'au chiffre de 1,000 à 1,200 hommes par bataillon, pour lequel les cadres actuels suffiraient, soit même qu'il est supérieur à l'effectif réglementaire, qui n'est que de 800 hommes par bataillon, mais avec 27 officiers, tandis que par exemple le bataillon Allemand n'a pour 1,000 hommes que 23 officiers.

De cette manière on réussirait, vu les aptitudes naturelles des Turcs, de faire des individus composant la nouvelle levée en peu de temps de bons soldats, et on créerait en même temps des forces suffisantes pour remplir la tâche éventuelle.

Il serait d'un grand avantage militaire pour la Turquie si elle réussissait par l'entremise de quelques Puissances amies de conclure pendant l'armistice la paix au moins avec le Monténégro en lui faisant des concessions. Dans le cas contraire elle agirait prudemment si à la fin de l'armistice de nouveaux adversaires lui surgissent en renonçant à l'offensive contre ce pays. Alors 30,000 hommes lui suffiraient pour une énergique défensive. Autre 35,000 hommes devraient rester en Bosnie—employés en partie comme jusqu'à présent contre la Serbie—et en Herzégovine; 50,000 hommes seraient destinés à abattre la dernière résistance de la Serbie, qui en partie deviendraient probablement après un peu de temps disponibles pour être utilisés sur la ligne du Danube où deux grandes armées devraient opérer. Celle de l'Ouest jetterait un corps assez fort pour une opération indépendante sur la rive (droite?) du Danube, et ferait occuper par lui la petite Wallachie, sitôt que la Russie violerait ouvertement la neutralité de la Roumanie, ce qui serait inévitable si elle déclare la guerre à la Turquie, la mer noire devant de fait rester fermée pour elle ou que ce pays même provoquerait ou commencerait les hostilités; le reste de l'armée opérerait d'après les circonstances principalement sur la rive (gauche?) du Danube dans l'ouest de la Bulgarie. La force de cette armée serait de 60,000 hommes à peu près. Celle de l'est forte de 75,000 s'appuyerait sur le quadrilatère formé par les quatre places fortes de Roustchouk, Silistria, Varna, et Choumla, sans s'enfermer cependant dans cet espace, mais aussi sans vouloir défendre directement tout le Dobrounja, ce qui aurait un dangereux éparpillement des forces pour conséquence. Il serait prudent d'avoir 20,000 en Thessalie prêts de marcher à la frontière pour le cas que la Grèce voulait entrer en

action. 30,000 hommes resteraient en garnison à Constantinople et dans quelques villes de l'intérieur.

Sur le théâtre de la guerre en Asie les places fortes d'Ardahan, de Kars, et d'Erzeroum facilitent la défense contre une invasion Russe. (Parmi toutes les places fortes de l'Empire c'est celle d'Erzeroum avec ses forts détachés qui représente le plus le type d'une fortification d'après le nouveau système; sa construction, qui a été commencée il y a une douzaine d'années, est presque entièrement achevée. Les ouvrages d'Ardahan sont de même entièrement nouveaux, mais pas projetés sur une si grande échelle que ceux d'Erzeroum et pas tous achevés. La place de Kars a été rendue plus forte depuis la guerre de Crimée par la construction de quelques forts détachés. Dans la Turquie d'Europe la construction de forts détachés mais qui n'ont pas été tous achevés a été aussi projetée pour les places fortes de Choumla, Varna, et Roustchouk). 25,000 hommes suffiraient pour la défense de Kars et d'Ardahan; l'armée de campagne forte de 50,000 hommes opérerait entre les rivières Kour et Araxes; 15,000 hommes couvriraient son flanc droit et observeraient la route d'Erzeroum à Bayazid, et 10,000 défendraient Batoum, objet d'une convoitise spéciale de la part de la Russie, et les défilés presque inaccessibles le long du cours inférieur de la Rivière Djourouk.

Bien entendu aux troupes susmentionnées destinées à opérer en Europe comme en Asie, devrait être joint le nombre proportionné de cavalerie et d'artillerie. Les irréguliers choisis régulièrement, organisés et bien disciplinés, pourraient encore servir à augmenter considérablement les forces, surtout les Circassiens, et en Asie spécialement les Kurdes fourniraient un matériel précieux pour le service comme cavalerie légère. L'artillerie qui est représentée par cinq régiments de campagne et deux de réserve, avec près de 600 canons, étant relativement très-faible, il serait à désirer que le Gouvernement en profite des canons Krupp nombreux qui se trouvent dans l'arsenal de Tophané pour former un nombre de nouvelles batteries.

D'après les expériences que l'armée Turque a faites encore tout nouvellement, il paraît absolument nécessaire pour remédier autant que possible au manque absolu d'un train organisé, et pour rendre les armées plus capables d'opérer, d'improviser un service régulier de transport, soit par chariots, soit par bêtes de somme. Chaque corps doit pouvoir disposer d'un nombre déterminé de colonnes de transport commandées et surveillées par des officiers et des sous-officiers de cavalerie et d'artillerie. De même il faudrait pourvoir à ce que des équipages de ponts fussent adjoints à chaque armée. La formation de brigades d'infanterie et de cavalerie, ainsi que des divisions des trois armes réunis dans chaque corps, servirait aussi à faciliter les opérations.

Le service d'intendance se trouvant en désarroi dans l'armée Turque, il serait indispensable d'établir dès à présent, dans les endroits convenables, sur les théâtres de guerre éventuels, des dépôts de blé et de farine, et de tous les objets nécessaires d'habillement, comme aussi d'armement et de munitions, et surtout d'approvisionner les places fortes pour toute la durée probable de la guerre.

Si le Gouvernement Turc se montre à la hauteur de la situation, et qu'il emploie l'énergie nécessaire, il pourrait donc réussir à préparer, dans le courant de quelques mois, une résistance efficace contre une invasion Russe éventuelle, mais il est à craindre qu'il ne prenne des mesures insuffisantes, surtout l'état financier du pays étant tel qu'il est.

Doc. 363 Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 17.)

(No. 201. Political.)

My Lord,

Belgrade, November 10, 1876.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship the accompanying copy of a despatch addressed by me on the 7th instant to Sir Henry Elliot respecting the reasons why Servia ought to desire conclusion of definite peace.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Doc. 364

Inclosure in Doc. 363.

Consul-General White to Sir H. Elliot.

Sir,

Belgrade, November 7, 1876.

NOTHING could be more lamentable than the ruin and misery brought on this Principality in consequence of the prolongation of the war far beyond the intention of the original projectors of it.

When the war first broke out, leading partizans of such a move asserted that it could not last beyond two months, as the resources of Servia would not allow of its prolongation beyond such a period.

Not only have the villages had to supply men and money, but the commissariat and transport services have been exclusively provided by requisitions. The last harvest has remained to rot in the fields over a vast tract of the country, and an equally considerable tract of land remains unsown.

Besides the natives of the land, there are thousands of Bulgarian and Bosniac refugees, who have sought shelter, running away from their own devastated homes and seeking for security at some distance beyond the actual scene of warlike operations. The Exchequer is exhausted; the desolation and ruin appears general, and the most natural thing to suppose would be that the rulers of the country would at once seize the first opportunity to close the door to all further complications, by endeavouring to restore peace and tranquillity to the Principality, and by seeking to detach peace with Servia from the general question of the pacification of the Slav provinces of Turkey.

Some such hope was in the mind of these very Rulers when they applied for the good offices of the Powers on August 24th, 1876. At that time it was doubtful whether the Porte would be willing to offer fair and generous terms of reconciliation; but the negotiations carried on since, if they have not produced any other result, have, at least, brought about a general understanding among the Powers that it would be desirable to restore to Servia the *status quo ante bellum* in the general interests of Europe.

Since the last defeats the Russian agents here are sedulously endeavouring to instil a disbelief that the Porte will now be as yielding on that question as she was some weeks ago.

It is evident that these persons continue, for some sinister object, to sow distrust in the minds of those Servians who would like to see peace restored, and to keep the Servian question unsettled and precarious for some time longer.

This cannot be, this ought not to be, the real interest of any well-wishers to Servia, nor of those European statesmen who are desirous of preserving the East of Europe from fresh calamities and unknown perils.

If the fate of this Principality could, as regards its relations to the Suzerain Power, be restored to the condition existing prior to this war, no prejudice would be caused to any other question now under discussion with Turkey, and even Russia can have no proper interest in keeping a question open which is nothing but a bleeding sore in a country in which she professes to take so deep an interest.

Should the Emperor of Russia ultimately determine to send troops against the Porte, the present exhausted condition of Servia debars it from any value, either as an ally or as a basis for operations. Moreover, the recent loss of the important position about Deligrad and the proximity to the territories of a military Power such as Austria would render such an experiment highly hazardous unless Russia could be previously assured of the connivance or co-operation of the latter Power.

There appears, therefore, every inducement, whether from motives of humanity or sound policy, to allow Servia to conclude a separate peace under the mediation of the Powers by signing a Protocol to that effect at Constantinople.

A couple of weeks ago, when the late disaster of the Servian army appeared approaching, it was thought likely that Prince Milan would apply for such a termination of his differences with the Porte directly to Constantinople as soon as the loss of Alexinatza should become known.

But, though some hesitation was apparent as following on that Turkish victory, it is now clear that, from the influence exercised by M. Kartzoff in the Prince's councils, that no step, however salutary for Servia, will be taken unless approved of and supported by that Representative of the Emperor of Russia, who has gradually superseded all his other colleagues, and even some influential Servians, and has succeeded in finally establishing his own influence in their stead.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Doc. 365

Prince Gortchakow to Count Schouvaloff.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Count Schouvaloff, November 18.)

Tsarskoe Sélo, le $\frac{1}{13}$ Novembre, 1876.

LES déplorable événements qui ensanglantent la presqu'île des Balkans ont profondément ému l'Europe. Les Cabinets se sont concertés et ont reconnu la nécessité de mettre un terme à cet état de choses, pour l'honneur de l'humanité et le repos général. Ils ont arrêté l'effusion du sang en imposant un armistice aux deux parties, et sont convenus de fixer les bases sur lesquelles la paix devrait être établie, afin d'offrir aux populations Chrétiennes des garanties sérieuses contre les incorrigibles abus de l'Administration Turque, ainsi que contre l'arbitraire sans frein des fonctionnaires Ottomans, et de rassurer ainsi l'Europe contre le retour périodique de ces crises sanglantes.

Le Cabinet Impérial a contribué de tous ses efforts à constituer le concert des Grandes Puissances en vue d'une question où les intérêts politiques doivent s'effacer devant l'intérêt plus général de l'humanité et du repos Européen. Il ne négligera rien de ce qui peut dépendre de lui afin que cet accord aboutisse à un résultat sérieux et solide, répondant aux exigences de la conscience publique et de la paix générale.

Mais tandis que la diplomatie délibère depuis un an, afin de traduire en faits le concert des volontés de l'Europe, la Porte a eu le loisir de convoquer du fond de l'Asie et de l'Afrique le ban et l'arrière ban des forces les moins disciplinées de l'Islamisme, de soulever le fanatisme Musulman, et d'écraser sous le poids du nombre les populations Chrétiennes en lutte pour leur existence. Les auteurs des horribles massacres qui ont révolté l'Europe, continuent à jouir de l'impunité, et à l'heure qu'il est, leur exemple propage et perpétue dans toute l'étendue de l'Empire Ottoman et sous les yeux de l'Europe indignée les mêmes actes de violence et de barbarie.

Dans ces conjonctures, fermement décidé pour sa part à poursuivre et à atteindre par tous les moyens en son pouvoir le but tracé par le concert des Grandes Puissances, Sa Majesté l'Empereur a jugé nécessaire de mobiliser une partie de son armée.

Sa Majesté Impériale ne veut pas la guerre, et fera ce qui est possible pour l'éviter. Mais elle est résolu à ne point s'arrêter tant que les principes reconnus équitables, humains, nécessaires par l'Europe entière, et auxquels le sentiment public de la Russie s'est associé avec la plus grande énergie, n'auront pas reçu leur entière exécution sanctionnée par des garanties efficaces.

Vous êtes autorisé à donner lecture et à laisser copie de la présente dépêche à M. le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères.

Recevez, &c.
(Signé) GORTCHAKOW.

Doc. 366 Memorandum communicated by Count Schouvaloff, November 18, 1876.

NE doutant pas des bonnes dispositions personnelles du Comte Derby, lui demandons publication du compte rendu de Lord Loftus, il nous importerait que la nation Anglaise puisse juger en connaissance de cause, et être édifiée par les paroles mêmes de Sa Majesté l'Empereur.

Doc. 367

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 18, 2:29 A.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

St. Petersburg, November 17, 1876, 9 P.M.

RUSSIAN Government have received from their Minister at Tehran and the Governor-General of Turkestan information of Afghan armaments, which are reported by them as directed against Turkomans and Merve; 10,000 men are said to be assembled at Herat, exclusive of cavalry. Cannon foundry established at Herat.

I am informed by Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs that Afghan incursions are taking place in the direction of Wakhan on Bokharan districts, which may produce difficulties with that Khanate. Governor-General is trying to arbitrate between the Turcomans and the Khan of Khiva in order to prevent renunciation of the Government by the Khan in favour of Russia.

Russian Government deny any wish or intention to interfere in the affairs of Afghanistan, but they seem to fear an Afghan expedition against Merve.

Doc. 368

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 18, 12:50 P.M.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Belgrade, November 18, 1876, 10:40 A.M.

M. MARINOVITCH goes to St. Petersburg to-morrow on a special mission, and the Russian Consul-General goes there at the same time, while the Austrian proceeds to Vienna by order of his Minister for Foreign Affairs.

It is generally admitted here, that Serbia is so exhausted as to hardly be able to resume hostilities, and as Russian-Turkish war is believed imminent, and the neutrality of Austria almost assured, an arrangement making provision for the position of Serbia in different contingencies will be welcome here.

Doc. 369 *Sir C. Wyke to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 18, evening.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Copenhagen, November 18, 1876.

A RUMOUR is repeated here in Court and Ministerial circles that on June 26 last a secret Treaty was signed between Russia and Germany by which the former undertook to cede her Baltic provinces to the latter, provided Germany used not only her influence but would also bring a pressure to bear on Austria which would prevent that Power from participating in the war.

Doc. 370

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 497. Most Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 18, 1876.

THE Austrian Ambassador called upon me this afternoon and told me that he was authorized to give me confidentially the following assurances :—

1stly. That Austria is under no engagements to Russia.

2ndly. That Austria will not adopt a policy of neutrality under all circumstances, but will protect her own interests if she thinks them menaced by any act of Russia.

I expressed to Count Beust my satisfaction at this communication.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 371 *Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 18, at night.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, November 18, 1876.

MINISTER for Foreign Affairs has officially signified to me that, with unanimous sanction of Grand Council, the Porte agrees to Conference.

His Excellency added that the acceptance is accompanied by a few reserves, such as that the measures to be proposed by the Conference shall not interfere with the mechanism of the general administration.

This is done with the view of justifying the Government in the eyes of the Turkish public, but no real importance is attached to it by the Porte.

* Repeated to Embassies.

Doc. 372

Employment of French Troops in Syria : 1860—61.

AS the employment of French troops in Syria is constantly being referred to in the press and elsewhere as a supposed precedent for the occupation of the Turkish Provinces by Russian troops, it may be interesting to show what was thought of it at the time by Her Majesty's Government.

The constant disputes between the Druses and the Maronites had formed the subject of arrangements between the Turkish authorities and the Consuls of the Five Powers for the preservation of tranquillity in the Lebanon in 1842-45, and the English and French Governments were in some manner pledged for their execution.

In June 1860 fresh disturbances broke out and massacres in the Lebanon of the Christians by the Druses and Arabs without protection from, if not with the connivance of, the Turkish authorities were reported from Damascus and Beyrout. The French Government proposed that a Commission of Inquiry should be sent out by the Powers, and Her Majesty's Government agreed to send the fleet to the coast of Syria with orders to land marines if required for the protection of the Christians. (Correspondence respecting the affairs of Syria 1860-61, page 3.)

The French Government next proposed (July 17, 1860,) that a body of foreign troops should be despatched to aid the Turkish forces in suppressing the disturbances. The British Government agreed to this, if the massacres and disorders continued, but added :—

"It appears to Her Majesty's Government, that although the exceptional circumstances justify this expedition, yet, if the news of the next ten days or a fortnight should justify the hope that the massacres are stopped, and will not be renewed, the very hazardous attempt of endeavouring to tranquillize the country by foreign troops should not be resorted to. In that case the French troops should not embark, or should at once return.

"It appears also to Her Majesty's Government that a final term should be inserted in the Convention for the evacuation of Syria by foreign troops. Six months might be the period fixed for the occupation.

"If Syria is not tranquillized in that time, it will be clear that no period, however long, will suffice to reduce it to peace and order.

* * * * *

"It must be added, that the employment of foreign forces in the interior of Syria is a measure which is sanctioned by Her Majesty's Government with great reluctance. It may provoke a fiercer fanaticism among the Mussulmans, and may possibly retard, instead of hastening, the pacification of Syria. It is a measure which may lead to international difficulties of a grave character.

"It is on these accounts desirable that the intervention should only be undertaken when the necessity is clearly proved, and that it should cease as soon as that necessity shall no longer exist."

On the 25th of July the French Government received fresh intelligence of disorders at Damascus, and it was determined to send out a Commission at once, and to enter into a Convention for the employment of French troops. Lord Dufferin was appointed British Commissioner on the 31st of July, but the Convention was delayed by the Russian Ambassador at Paris asking that an Article should be added, applying its stipulations to other parts of the Sultan's dominions where the Christians might want similar protection; if this were objected to he proposed a Protocol for the protection of Christians in Turkey by the Powers of Europe.

Lord Russell (July 28, page 24,) instructed Lord Cowley to object to these

proposals as going altogether beyond the present occasion, and to refuse to sign a Convention or Protocol in which any Article to that effect was contained.

On the 1st of August further news was received from Damascus according to which 8,000 victims had fallen in that town, and the Porte having given its assent, Protocols were signed on the 3rd of August as follows :—*

"His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, wishing to stop, by prompt and efficacious measures, the effusion of blood in Syria, and to show his firm resolution to establish order and peace amongst the populations placed under his sovereignty, and their Majesties the Emperor of Austria, the Emperor of the French, the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, His Royal Highness the Prince Regent of Prussia, and His Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, having offered their active co-operation, which His Majesty the Sultan has accepted, the Representatives of their said Majesties and His Royal Highness have agreed upon the following Articles :—

"ARTICLE I.

"A body of European troops, which may be increased to 12,000 men, shall be sent to Syria to contribute towards the re-establishment of tranquillity."

"ARTICLE II.

"His Majesty the Emperor of the French agrees to furnish immediately the half of this body of troops. If it should become necessary to raise its effective force to the number stipulated in the preceding Article, the High Powers would come to an understanding with the Porte without delay by the ordinary course of diplomacy, upon the designation of those among them who would have to provide it.

"ARTICLE III.

"The Commander-in-chief of the expedition will, on his arrival, enter into communication with the Commissioner Extraordinary of the Porte, in order to concert all the measures required by circumstances, and to take up the positions which there may be occasion to occupy in order to fulfil the object of the present Act.

"ARTICLE IV.

"Their Majesties &c., &c., promise to maintain, on the coast of Syria, sufficient naval forces to contribute towards the success of the common efforts for the maintenance or the re-establishment of tranquillity on the coast of Syria.

"ARTICLE V.

"The High Parties, convinced that such a period will be sufficient to attain the object of pacification which they have in view, fix at six months the duration of the occupation of the European troops in Syria.

"ARTICLE VI.

"The Sublime Porte undertakes to facilitate, as far as lies in her power, the furnishing supplies and provisions for the expeditionary corps.

"It is understood that the six preceding Articles will be embodied verbatim into a Convention, which will receive the signatures of the undersigned Representatives as soon as they are furnished with full powers from their Sovereigns, but that the stipulations of this Protocol will immediately come into force.

"The Chargé d'Affaires of Prussia, however, points out that the present distribution of the Prussian ships of war will not permit his Government to co-operate at present in the execution of Article IV."

"The Plenipotentiaries of, &c., desirous of establishing, in conformity with the intentions of their respective Courts, the true character of the assistance afforded to the Sublime Porte by the provisions of the Protocol signed this day, the feelings which have dictated the clauses of this Act and their perfect disinterestedness, declare in the most formal manner that the Contracting Powers do not intend to seek for and will not seek for, in the execution of their engagements, any territorial advantages, any exclusive influence, or any concession with regard to the commerce of their subjects such as could not be granted to the subjects of all other nations.

"Nevertheless they cannot refrain in recalling here the Acts issued by the Sultan, the great importance of which was established by Article XI of the Treaty of March 30, 1856, from expressing the value which their respective Courts attach to the fulfilment of the solemn promises of the Porte that serious administrative measures should be taken to ameliorate the condition of the Christian population of every sect in the Ottoman Empire.

* A formal Convention in the same words was signed on the 5th of September.

"The Plenipotentiary of the Sublime Porte takes note of this declaration of the Representatives of the High Contracting Powers, and undertakes to transmit it to his Court, pointing out that the Sublime Porte has employed and continues to employ her efforts in the sense of the wish expressed above."

On the 16th of August the French troops arrived at Beyrout. In the meanwhile Fuad Pasha, who had been appointed by the Porte as Special Commissioner, had commenced his inquiries. 167 persons had been executed at Damascus; a large number condemned to imprisonment, and other rigorous measures adopted.

Lord Dufferin arrived in Syria on the 3rd of September; the French and Russian Commissioners on the 14th; the Austrian being Consul-General there was already on the spot, and the Prussian was shortly expected.

By this time order had been restored in the neighbourhood of Damascus and the large towns of the plain, the majority of those who were implicated in the disturbances having fled to the mountain. The Turkish army was ordered to march into the interior in pursuit, and an understanding was come to that detachments of the French troops should follow in their wake and assist in patrolling the mountain.

The first meeting of the Commissioners was held on the 26th of September. On the 29th Lord Dufferin reported (page 158) that the Maronite camp followers of the French troops had murdered several unarmed Druses, including a woman and a blind old man; and, shortly afterwards, that twenty more Druses had been murdered by them (page 167). Lord Dufferin subsequently furnished a nominal list provided by Major Fraser, in January, 1861, of the Druses murdered by the Christians during the military occupation of Mount Lebanon up to that time. The list comprised 136 men, 25 women, and 15 children killed; and 63 men and 22 women wounded.

In short, the appearance of the French troops was taken as a signal for the Christians to revenge themselves, and it was not long before the opinion gained ground that their presence did more harm than good.

Indeed, from the first Lord J. Russell had foreseen the "evils attendant upon a foreign occupation" (page 31), and only consented to the troops going under the pressure of the French Government, who declared that it was the only means of stopping the massacres.

When the French regiments were on their way out (August 13, page 57,) Lord J. Russell thought it necessary to write the following despatches to guard against their being left in sole occupation:—

"My Lord,

"Foreign Office, August 13, 1860.

"As there may arise, in the opinion of the French Government, a necessity for dispatching to Syria, the remaining 6,000 men stipulated for in the Protocol of the 3rd instant, your Excellency is instructed in such case to report such opinion of the French Government.

"Her Majesty's Government will then consider whether there is any cause for such reinforcement, and whether the half or even the whole of the additional 6,000 men shall be furnished by Her Majesty.

"At present it seems desirable that the French Division should not proceed to Damascus as the reports from thence show that they might cause a fresh outbreak of Mahometan fanaticism.

"I am, &c.

(Signed) "J. RUSSELL."

"Sir,

"Foreign Office, September 5, 1860.

"As the accounts which have lately been received from Syria are not altogether satisfactory, I have to instruct you to take an opportunity of stating to Count Rechberg that, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, if the second division of 6,000 men should be required in that province, according to the Convention concluded at Paris, Great Britain and Prussia might furnish 3,000 men each, and that Her Majesty's Government are quite ready to agree to a proposal to that effect, or to make it, if thought desirable.

"I am, &c.

(Signed) "J. RUSSELL."

The French, on the other hand, showed little disposition to withdraw their troops, and kept arguing that this could not be done without fresh outbreaks; and on the 7th of November Lord John Russell addressed a despatch to Lord Cowley of which the following is the published extract, and which will be seen to be singularly applicable to the present situation:—

(Extract.)

"Foreign Office, November 7, 1860.

"The Marquis de Chateaurenard read to me a few days ago a despatch on the subject of Syria. M. Thouvenal in this despatch adverted to the escape of the Druse criminals, and pointed out the facility with which they might return from the Hauran to commit fresh murders.

"There appear to Her Majesty's Government to be insuperable objections to a prolonged occupation of Syria by European troops. These troops were sent to Syria in consequence of frightful massacres which filled all Europe with horror. They went to support the Sultan's authorities in their task of restoring order, and punishing the principal criminals. By the activity of Fuad Pasha, and the energy of General Beaufort, this work of humanity and justice has been in great part accomplished. To keep the European troops there in order to hunt out other criminals in the caves and recesses of the mountains would be an endless, and indeed a hopeless work. To augment the European force, and maintain them in Syria with a view to prevent fresh outrages, would be to alter entirely the original purpose which the Sultan and the Five Powers had in view. What limit, either of numbers or of time, could be placed to such an occupation? It would soon degenerate into a transfer of the local Government of Syria to the Five Powers, and thus instead of giving a useful example, well fitted to terrify the Mahometan fanatics, the European occupation would be a precedent for other occupations in Bulgaria, in Bosnia, and other Provinces, and thus lead the way to a partition of the Turkish Empire.

"Her Majesty's Government would prefer, as a choice of evils, to see the Government of Syria restored to authorities named by or connected with the Porte, in the manner which the Mixed Commission shall consider most favourable to the future peace of Syria. The responsibility would then be left with the Porte, and to those who will derive their right to rule from the acknowledged Government of the country. No security, it is true, would be thus obtained against a recurrence of the conflicts of Druses and Christians; but, so long as the two races exist in the country, no permanent security can be obtained."

The Porte soon began to remonstrate against the continuance of the French occupation beyond the time specified in the Convention (page 249).

On the 4th of December Lord Dufferin forwarded a petition from the heads of the Christian sects of Damascus which contained in addition to a demand for vengeance and compensation, a vehement desire that the province should be permanently occupied by an European force. Lord Dufferin, however, expressed the opinion that an European army of occupation was no longer necessary to the security of the Christian communities of Syria, and that the expectations indicated by the petitioners should by all means be discouraged.

Lord J. Russell wrote to Sir H. Bulwer on the 1st of January, 1861:—

"Sir,

"The French Ambassador addressed me the other day nearly to the following effect:—

"The Emperor is quite ready to withdraw his troops from Syria at the time stipulated, but if your Government urge this evacuation, remember that they make themselves responsible if massacres and outrages against the Christians are renewed."

"Her Majesty's Government are willing to undertake their share in this responsibility, heavy as it is, but the Ministers of the Porte must be made clearly to understand, on their part, their obligations and their risks.

* * * * *

"It is clear, indeed, that the French forces at present in Syria rather increase than allay irritation. But should their departure be followed by fresh massacres, and should European occupation be renewed on a larger scale, the Government of the Sultan must not expect that Her Majesty's Government can ever again express a reliance on the efficacy, justice, and impartiality of Turkish sway."

There was some difference of opinion among the Commissioners at Beyrout with regard to the prolongation of the occupation. Lord Dufferin reported (page 290):—

"I contented myself with expressing in as explicit and frank a manner as I could, my conviction that the French army, useful as its arrival had originally been, was become an embarrassment to the Government; that I considered it could be withdrawn to-morrow from the country without risk; that Fuad Pasha and his troops were quite competent to maintain order, and that the police duties it was now discharging in the Lebanon were never intended to form part of its mission.

"In fact I submitted to my colleagues the same opinion I have already had the honour of laying before your Excellency in my despatch of the 4th instant."

Lord John Russell wrote to Lord Cowley on the 9th of January, 1861, after mentioning what had passed in the Commission:—

"The Turkish Ambassador has frequently represented to me that his Government considers the presence of foreign troops an obstacle to the pacification of Syria.

"Aali Pasha represents the Maronites and Druses as two factions, divided, not by religious or moral faith, but by political rivalry. He paints the Maronites as eager to inflict wrong and suffering upon the Druses, even upon those altogether innocent of the massacre. He declares that the presence of the French troops encourages the insolence and the violence of the Maronites, and thus keeps up the feeling of hostility and rancour between them and the Druses.

"Lord Dufferin's representations differ but little from those of Aali Pasha. I send your Excellency a copy of a despatch from Lord Dufferin to me, in which he gives his opinions, and relates that the Christian communities had asked, through their bishops, for 4,500 of the heads of their enemies. This is the manner in which these Christian bishops in the East preach 'peace on earth and goodwill towards men.'

"The Turkish Government, therefore, unrepresented at the meeting of the 18th of December earnestly desire the removal of the foreign force, as serving only to keep alive the bloodthirsty desire of revenge entertained by the Maronites and other Christian sects.

"But here an important reflection arises, to which I beg your Excellency, in your conversations with M. Thouvenel, to give due weight. The French Government proposed, in July last, that European troops should be sent to Syria. Her Majesty's Government consented on two conditions: first, that the foreign troops should act in concert with the Turkish Commissioner, Fuad Pasha; and secondly, that the stay of the foreign troops should not be prolonged beyond six months. It was on the strength of these two conditions that Her Majesty's Government urged upon the Porte the acceptance of foreign aid to tranquillize Syria; it was on the faith of these conditions that the Porte gave her reluctant assent."

Lord J. Russell wrote in the same sense on the 16th of January (page 321) to Vienna and Berlin, and added:—

"It appears that, from time to time, massacres and murders have desolated the district of the Lebanon. Maronites have been as forward in acts of cruel revenge, and in the indulgence of hatred, as the Druses. Before the massacres of 1860, the Maronites, under the guidance of one of their Bishops, had been preparing arms to a large extent, and were evidently meditating war upon the Druses. Since the French occupation, Maronites have followed the march of the French troops; and when they lit upon a helpless Druse old man or woman alone, have murdered them without mercy. Some twenty or thirty Druses, it is said, were put to death in cold blood by the Maronites during the first advance of the French troops.

"At a later period a tax was proposed, and had even been sanctioned at one moment, imposing a payment upon every Druse taxpayer equal to half the amount of a peasant's yearly income. Had it been persisted in, the Druse peasantry must have abandoned their property, and fled from their dwellings. This, in fact, seems to have been the object sought.

"Again, when the punishment of the Druses was in question, the Christian sects, through their Bishops, demanded that out of 8,000 adult Druses, 4,600 heads should be given to them to satiate their vengeance; so little has the doctrine of forgiveness of injuries been imbibed by these Maronite bishops and their flocks.

"In fact, though nominally Christians, they are in reality a fierce and barbarous race. They seek the extermination of a hostile tribe, and Her Majesty's Government cannot think that the idolatry and superstition of that tribe justify the Powers of Europe in promoting or consenting to their extermination.

"In conclusion, it is to be remarked that the utmost alleged in favour of continued foreign occupation is an apprehension in the minds of the Christians of danger to them after the departure of the foreign troops. That apprehension, of course, cannot be removed by any reasonings. Since Fuad Pasha went to Syria no massacres have been committed there. But it is in the nature of foreign occupation to keep alive an apprehension of the dangers which that occupation professes to prevent; and thus, if such apprehensions were to be admitted as reasons for the continuance of foreign occupation, that occupation would, by the effects which it produces, have a tendency to perpetuate itself.

"Thus, if the French occupation of Syria were to be prolonged, we should probably find the apprehensions of the Syrian Maronites as strong in 1871 as they are in 1861; unless, indeed, in the meantime, under the protection of the Christian Powers, they had succeeded in exterminating the whole of the inhabitants of the Mountain who are not of their own party.

"For these reasons, therefore, Her Majesty's Government are unable to join in any representations to the Porte, with a view of renewing the term of foreign occupation in Syria. As to any resolution on the part of the Powers of Europe to retain a European force in Syria without the assent of the Sultan, that would clearly be an act of war, and is not to be thought of by Powers who profess to entertain towards Turkey sentiments of friendship, and who have together united in guaranteeing her integrity and independence."

The French Government finding that the British Government were supporting the Porte in pressing for the evacuation, determined to propose a Conference of the Powers to decide whether the occupation of Syria by foreign troops should be prolonged or not. Lord J. Russell replied January 24 (page 331) to the arguments of the French Government:—

"The resolution to send troops to Syria was taken upon a sudden emergency, when all Europe was in a state of horror and indignation at the intelligence of the massacres perpetrated in the Lebanon and at Damascus. The object of the five Powers was to prevent a renewal of those massacres, and to show the fanatical tribes of Syria that such outrages upon humanity could not be committed without punishment and reparation.

"At the same time a Commission was appointed, over which an officer of the Sultan was to preside, or has been chosen to preside, to consider and advise upon the means of pacifying Syria. This Commission was, in the first instance, to urge the Sultan's officers to punish the guilty and to afford indemnity to their victims. Its further duty, and, as M. Thouvenel says, the most important part of its task, was 'to collect and propose to the Powers the elements of the new arrangements which it is proposed to make, with the concurrence of the Ottoman Government, for the administration of the Mountain.'

"The institution of this Commission, however, was a measure entirely separate from the Convention

for sending foreign troops to Syria, and it had objects of which some were entirely separate and distinct from the dispatch of troops.

"It appears to Her Majesty's Government that it would be a grave error in point of right and in point of policy, if the five Powers were to confound the question of foreign occupation and that of the future administration of the Mountain.

"It must be recollected that Syria is a province of the Turkish Empire. The Sultan is the Sovereign of that country, and not the five Powers. The first question to ask, therefore, is whether the Sultan has need of foreign troops to maintain tranquillity in Syria. The next question is, how the Sultan proposes to provide for that tranquillity, and prevent a renewal of the massacres of last June.

"You will now see the conclusion to which my arguments tend. Her Majesty's Government are quite prepared, either in Conference or otherwise, to inquire of the Sultan's Ministers whether the Porte is ready to become responsible for the present tranquillity of Syria, and has provided sufficient means for that purpose.

"Her Majesty's Government are not prepared to maintain European troops in Syria until means are found of totally preventing for the future those bloody encounters of hostile tribes which have been for ages the scourge of that country. They care not whether those European troops should belong to France or to any other country. Her Majesty's Government will not agree to become responsible for the future administration of a province of the Sultan by the agency of foreign troops."

It is unnecessary to recapitulate all the negotiations for the Conference. Lord John Russell held that it rested with the Porte, and that if the Porte insisted on the evacuation without a fresh Conference the French Government were bound to adhere to the Convention.

Lord Dufferin wrote on the 18th of January that he considered the presence of the French troops in the country very detrimental to the prestige on the Sultan's authority, and cited an instance in which the Latin guardian of the Franciscan convent at Jerusalem had rescued a person who had been imprisoned by Fuad Pasha, at the request of Lord Dufferin, for an outrage on Protestants at Galilee.

The Porte eventually acceded to a Conference, with some reservations, and Lord John Russell addressed the following instructions to Lord Cowley on the 19th of February :—

"My Lord,

"Your Excellency will have received from me by telegraph the instructions by which Her Majesty's Government desired that your conduct should be guided in the Conference on Syrian affairs appointed to be held to-day.

"You will have seen by those instructions that Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that the presence of the French troops in Syria, instead of securing the peace of the country, serves to encourage the Maronites to attack the Druses, and to retaliate, by the murder of Druse men, women, and children, the wrongs inflicted on the Maronites at the commencement of the outbreak in the course of last summer.

"But Her Majesty's Government, as you will have seen, anticipating the possibility of the Turkish Plenipotentiary being willing to consent to the prolongation of the stay of French troops in Syria until the end of April, were content in that case, and on the clearly expressed ground that the season of the year was unfavourable for the re-embarkation of the troops on an exposed coast, to agree in the concession made by the Porte's Representative, although desiring that the occupation of the country during this extended period should be restricted to the sea-coast.

"The great object of Her Majesty's Government is, as I explained to your Excellency, to prevent the continuance of the state of things which, from Lord Dufferin's reports, now prevails in Syria, and to save the Druse population from becoming victims to the atrocities which the Maronites are too ready to exercise against them.

"I am, &c.
(Signed) "J. RUSSELL."

The French Government represented in the Conference that the occupation ought to continue until the Commissioners had settled the re-organization of the administration of the Lebanon, but Lord John Russell protested strongly against any indefinite occupation. The business of the Commission was delayed by difficulties raised against each scheme advanced, although it could, Lord John Russell said, have been finished forthwith if the French Government would agree that the majority should bind the minority. He was, however, willing to agree to fix the continuance of the occupation up to the 1st of May, afterwards altered to the 5th of June.

The French Government still continued to propose indefinite terms, and Lord J. Russell adhered to a fixed date, stating that "Her Majesty's Government, on their part, consider that the cause of humanity suffers by the desultory murders of men, women, and children of the Druse tribes by the Maronites, under cover of the French occupation. They fear that these murders may lead either to a fearful retaliation, or to the extermination of the Druses."

On the 19th of March a Convention was signed at Paris prolonging the occupation to the 5th of June.

The Commission concluded its labours in Syria on the 4th of May, and Lord Dufferin left Syria on the 11th.

The Russian Government made a final effort to protest against the evacuation (May 2), but it was nevertheless carried out on the 2nd of June and following days.

On the 9th of June a Protocol was signed with the Porte by the Ambassadors of the Five Powers at Constantinople with a Règlement annexed to it for the administration of the Lebanon.

It will be seen from the foregoing Memorandum that the dispatch of foreign troops for Syria was only agreed to after some demur under the immediate necessity of stopping the massacres at Damascus and in the Lebanon, that Her Majesty's Government distrusted the plan from the first, and that scarcely had the French troops got there when negotiations were commenced for their recall. Their presence effected little or no practical good, and served only to foment hostility and revenge between the Maronites and Druses. The French Government retained their troops as long as they could, and it was only by the most energetic remonstrances, amounting almost to menaces, that the British Government was enabled to obtain their recall.

It must be remembered, moreover, that this occupation, limited as was its character, will bear no comparison with the proposals that have been advanced for the Russian occupation of Bulgaria. The French troops co-operated with the Turkish forces, which were greatly superior in number, and merely acted as police to preserve order between the contending tribes. No effort was made to take the government of the province out of the hands of the Turkish authorities, with whom, in fact, neither the French General nor the Commissioners attempted to interfere. If, even under these circumstances, the occupation was so soon found to be a mistake, it is not difficult to see how dangerous the precedent would be found if it were to be utilised, as Lord J. Russell feared might be the case, to support schemes of Slavonic aggrandizement and ambition leading the way to the partition of the Turkish Empire.

(Signed) TENTERDEN.

November 21, 1876.

Doc. 373

The Earl of Derby to the Marquis of Salisbury.

(No. 1.)

My Lord.

Foreign Office, November 20, 1876.

THE Queen having been graciously pleased to appoint you to be Her Majesty's Special Ambassador to represent this country, conjointly with Sir Henry Elliot, Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, in the Conference about to be held at that city, I have the honour to transmit to your Excellency the accompanying Full Powers and Credentials.*

I am at the same time commanded by the Queen to convey to you the following general instructions for your Excellency's guidance.

As your Excellency is already acquainted with the course of the negotiations which have led to the proposal for a Conference, it is not necessary that I should enter into any statement of them. I accordingly merely inclose copies of the correspondence for reference when required.†

Among these papers your Lordship will find the despatch addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassadors on the 4th instant, in which Her Majesty's Government state that they believe, from the communications which they have received from the Powers, that there is a general feeling that the only solution of the questions arising out of recent events in Turkey is to be found in a Conference, and that they have determined to renew the suggestion made by them on the 5th of October, and at once to propose that a Conference should be held forthwith at Constantinople, in which all the Guaranteeing Powers and the Porte should take part, and each Government should be at liberty to appoint two Plenipotentiaries to represent it.

* Full Powers and Credentials.

† "Correspondence respecting Affairs in the Herzegovina," Part I; *ibid.*, Part II; *ibid.*, Part III; *ibid.*, Part IV; *ibid.*, Part V. "Correspondence respecting Affairs in Turkey," Part VI; *ibid.*, Part VII, pages 1-80. Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby, No. 472, October 23, 1876. Earl of Derby to Musurus Pasha, November 11, 1876.

Her Majesty's Government submitted, as the bases for the deliberations of the Conference :—

1. The independence and the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire.

2. A Declaration that the Powers do not intend to seek for, and will not seek for, any territorial advantage, any exclusive influence, or any concession with regard to the commerce of their subjects which those of every other nation may not equally obtain.

Such a Declaration was made on the 17th of September, 1840, in the Protocol for the Pacification of the Levant, and again on the 3rd of August, 1860, in regard to the Pacification of Syria.

3. The basis of pacification proposed to the Porte on the 25th of September, viz. :—

(a.) The *status quo*, speaking roughly, both as regards Servia and Montenegro.

(b.) That the Porte should simultaneously undertake, in a Protocol to be signed at Constantinople with the Representatives of the Mediating Powers, to grant to Bosnia and Herzegovina a system of local or administrative autonomy, by which is to be understood a system of local institutions which shall give the population some control over their own local affairs and guarantees against the exercise of arbitrary authority. There is to be no question of a tributary State.

Guarantees of a similar kind to be also provided against maladministration in Bulgaria.

The reforms already agreed to by the Porte, in the note addressed to the Representatives of the Powers on the 13th of February last, to be included in the administrative arrangements for Bosnia and the Herzegovina, and, so far as they may be applicable, for Bulgaria.

These bases have met with general acceptance by the other Powers, and may therefore be considered as regulating the deliberations of the Conference and marking the limits within which its discussions should be confined.

Her Majesty's Government do not anticipate that there need be any great difficulty in settling the terms of peace between Servia, Montenegro, and the Porte.

With regard to Servia the Ottoman Government originally made certain requirements stated in the Memorandum of the Porte of the 14th of September; but, these having been regarded as inadmissible by the Powers, the Porte has since, in taking act of the proposal of the Powers for the re-establishment of peace on the basis of the *status quo ante*, declared itself ready to submit to their decision. The Porte has therefore acquiesced in the *status quo*, at all events in principle. By the phrase used in the basis Her Majesty's Government have desired not to exclude from consideration any additional arrangement, as for instance the completion of the railway between Belgrade and Nisch, which may be of mutual advantage to both countries concerned.

The case of Montenegro is different. Her Majesty's Government have on several occasions expressed the opinion that it would be politic on the part of the Porte, and for the benefit of the Turkish Provinces adjoining Montenegro, as well as of the Principality, if some territorial concession were made to Montenegro which would have the effect of bringing under the rule of Prince Nicholas the adjacent population already allied to Montenegro and which is now only a source of weakness to Turkey.

Mr. Consul Holmes, who has an intimate knowledge of the country, has advised the cession to Montenegro of the districts of Piva, Drobnjak, Baniani, and Zupci, and also the port of Spitzza. He mentioned that the districts in question are of no sort of value to Turkey, but rather a cause of embarrassment; that they administer their own affairs without interference from the Ottoman authorities, and not only pay no taxes, but receive some small assistance from the Province to which they nominally belong.

The Austrian Government at one time seemed inclined to oppose any extension of Montenegro, but have since expressed an opinion that the demands and wishes of Prince Nicholas might be attended to when the question of the delimitation of the frontier was brought forward. The Austrian Government, however, still retain the belief that it would be inexpedient that any concession to Montenegro should include a seaport, and it is understood that the Italian Government take a similar view.

Her Majesty's Government do not share these apprehensions, since it appears to them that the possession of lands in the plains, and access to the sea, would encourage the people of Montenegro to engage in agriculture and commerce, and thus attain a state of civilization, prosperity, and contentment, which would be the best security for the maintenance of peace and good relations with the Porte.

The Prince of Montenegro has recently said that the concession of Spitzza would be almost valueless, as there is no port there, nor any possibility of making one, and the mountains debar access on that side into the interior, and that the whole of the Sutorman

district, with the port of Antivari, ought to be ceded to him if the cession were to be of any value.

Your Excellency will find in the correspondence, and will, no doubt, have an opportunity of learning also at Constantinople, what are the concessions desired by His Highness.

Her Majesty's Government do not consider it necessary to express any opinion upon them at present further than that they would willingly see any satisfactory settlement of the question arrived at.

In the proposals for pacification which Sir Henry Elliot was instructed to make to the Porte on the 21st of September, and which form the third basis for the Conference, Her Majesty's Government coupled with the conclusion of peace between the Porte and Servia and Montenegro the proposition to which I have already referred for a Protocol to be simultaneously signed by the Porte with the Representatives of the mediating Powers.

The Turkish Government have made strong objections to signing a Protocol, alleging that, should they consent to do so, the prestige and authority of the Porte in all parts of the Empire would be impaired, and they have asked whether it would not be sufficient that the promise should be made in identic notes to the foreign Representatives.

The Turkish Government have also remonstrated strongly against the proposal to grant any system of administrative autonomy to the Provinces. They have stated that the greatest inconvenience would be caused by the diplomatic discussion of questions of purely internal administration, and declared that they should consider any action which had for its object the interposition of the Powers between the populations of Bosnia and Herzegovina and their legitimate authority to be an infringement of the rights of sovereignty and independence of the Porte, and arguing further that an exceptional form of Government for the insurgent provinces would be an encouragement to fresh disorders in other parts of European Turkey, and would seriously disturb the general economy of the Empire.

Her Majesty's Government have been unable to agree in this view of the matter. They have replied that the mere announcement of reforms by the Porte cannot be accepted as sufficient, and that even if Her Majesty's Government would be disposed to accept such an announcement no other Power would do so: that a Protocol was signed with the Porte in regard to the Lebanon in 1860, and that as a matter of fact the Porte has been in correspondence with the Powers for the last two years with regard to the pacification of the Provinces, and both accepted, and urged on the acceptance of Her Majesty's Government, the note of Count Andrassy.

The objection to the grant of reforms to Bosnia and Herzegovina because they might occasion discontent elsewhere seems to Her Majesty's Government to be equally untenable.

The immediate necessity of the situation is to restore tranquillity to the disturbed Provinces. The course of events has made it obvious that this can now only be done by concert with the Powers, and it is in vain for the Porte to expect that the Powers will be satisfied with the mere general assurances which have already been so often given, and have proved to be so imperfectly executed. If the Conference should decide upon a scheme of administration for these particular Provinces, which may be applicable and advantageous to other Provinces, it will be open to the Porte to extend it to them. No doubt the Conference will give due weight to the reforms already promulgated, which will properly form an important element for consideration, but pacification cannot be attained by Proclamations, and the Powers have a right to demand, in the interest of the peace of Europe, that they shall examine for themselves the measures required for the reform of the administration of the disturbed Provinces, and that adequate security shall be provided for carrying those measures into operation.

Her Majesty's Government have thought it desirable to refer to these objections advanced by the Porte as they will probably be again put forward at the Conference or on your Excellency's arrival at Constantinople, and it is therefore right that you should be in a position to state positively that they cannot be entertained.

As the reforms recommended to the Porte by Count Andrassy have received the assent both of the Powers and the Porte, they may form a useful starting-point for the deliberations of the Conference.

These reforms were:—

“ Religious liberty, full and entire ;

“ Abolition of the farming of taxes ;

“ A law to guarantee that the product of the direct taxation of Bosnia and Herzegovina shall be employed for the immediate interests of the Province, under the control of bodies constituted in the sense of the Firman of December 12 ;

"The institution of a Special Commission, composed of an equal number of Mussulmans and Christians, to superintend the execution of the reforms proposed by the Powers, as well as of those proclaimed in the Iradé of October 2 and Firman of December 12 ;

"Lastly, the amelioration of the condition of the rural populations."

In the despatch which I addressed to Count Andrassy on the 25th of January last I pointed out that most of these recommendations were already provided for either by the Hatti-Scheriff of Gulhané of 1839, the Hatti-Humayoun of 1856, or the Iradé and Firman of October 2 and December 12, 1875, and the abolition of the system of tax-farming was already agreed to, but the question of the application of the direct taxes and the lease of land to the peasants, to which Count Andrassy also referred in his despatch, required further consideration.

Her Majesty's Government have sought, in the basis which they have now proposed, to expand this scheme of reforms so as to give it a more immediately practical character. They believe that, so far as the laws of the Turkish Empire are concerned, religious liberty is already fully provided for, and that any reform required in this respect is to be secured not by enacting fresh laws but by providing for the faithful execution of those already existing.

One of the grievances complained of in Bosnia has been the prohibition of the use of bells in the Christian Churches, but this has been, at all events partially, removed. The refusal of Christian evidence has likewise been reported, and, although the Hatti-Humayoun expressly provides that Christians shall be admitted as witnesses, it is too probable that in remote districts, or where the Mussulman population is predominant and under little control, gross injustice is often committed by its exclusion. The real difficulty, however, in establishing religious liberty is the difficulty which lies at the root of the whole question of administrative reforms, viz., the fact that the Mussulmans have for generations exercised authority as the principal owners of the land, and never failed to find Christians willing to be subservient to them in the administration of the country.

The expression "direct taxation" has been shown to be somewhat ambiguous, but a well-defined control over the local taxation would be one of the reforms which would properly be comprised under the proposal of Her Majesty's Government. The Firman of December 12, promised a general revision and unification of the taxation of the Empire to be distributed in just proportion over the various provinces, and provided that the collection of the taxes should no longer be left to the police, but be entrusted to Collectors of the Revenue elected by the whole population, Mussulman and non-Mussulman, and acting under special instructions.

Her Majesty's Government are not aware that effect has yet been given to any measure of this kind, but it would be necessary that some steps should be taken to establish an equitable system of taxation before deciding on the distribution of the funds to be made applicable to local purposes. It must, moreover, be borne in mind that certain taxes have been hypothecated for the discharge of foreign loans, and that the withdrawal of the direct taxation of the Empire from the Treasury might have, as Her Majesty's Government remarked in their answer to Count Andrassy, the most serious effect in impeding the execution of those public works and other measures of general utility upon which the improvement of the condition of the population depends.

The system of local institutions contemplated by Her Majesty's Government to be granted to Bosnia and Herzegovina with the view of giving the population some control over their local affairs, would also imply a control over the application of local rates or other similar imposts levied within the province for local purposes.

The note of the Porte of October last provided for an extension of the Law establishing vilayets throughout the Empire.

This Law originally applied to the province of the Danube, but was extended and made applicable to the Empire generally, by a Law passed in 1867 ; and provided for the division of the Empire into provinces called vilayets, placed under Governors-General (Valis) named by the Sultan.

Each vilayet is divided into sandjaks (arrondissements), under the administration of a Mutessariff (Governor.)

The sandjak is divided into cazas (cantons) under the jurisdiction of a Kaimakam (Lieutenant-Governor).

The caza is divided into communes.

Groups of small villages, not of sufficient importance to form independent cazas, are incorporated with the nearest cazas under the name of "nahié."

Each of these divisions has a separate system of administration subordinate to the Vali.

The Vali is assisted by an Administrative Council, composed of the Chief Magistrate, who is the head of the Cheri (Mussulman religious tribunals), the Director of Finance, the Director of Correspondence, the Director of External Affairs, and four other members, two elected by the Mussulman population and two by the non-Mussulman.

There is also a General Council for each vilayet, composed of four members for each sandjak, two Mussulmans and two non-Mussulmans. This Council is convoked once a year, at the principal town of the vilayet, and its session is not to last more than forty days. It is the duty of this Council-General to attend to local matters, and its resolutions are transmitted by the Vali to the Imperial Government.

The Mutessariff governing each sandjak is assisted by an Administrative Council, composed of the Cadi of the central caza, the Mufti of the chief town, the Spiritual chiefs of the non-Mussulman population, the Sub-Director of Finance, the Director of Correspondence of the sandjak, and four permanent members—two Mussulmans and two non-Mussulmans. This Council regulates the affairs of the sandjak.

The Kaimakam governing a caza has an elective Council, three Mussulman and three non-Mussulman members.

In each commune there is also a Council called the "Conseil des Anciens," composed partly of Mussulman, partly of Christian members; the Imams and Spiritual Chiefs of the non-Mussulman population are *ex officio* members of the Council, which regulates the distribution of the taxes, and questions of public health and agriculture.

There have been other laws relating to the vilayets, but the foregoing account will be sufficiently full for the purposes of this despatch.

The note of October last stated that the Porte intended to add to this scheme of administration an Assembly General, elected by the inhabitants of the vilayets and the capital to meet at Constantinople for annual sessions of three months, and to vote the budgets of the Empire, laws, and taxes. There is also to be another Assembly or Senate nominated by the Government.

Sir Henry Elliot has stated that he is strongly of opinion, in common, he believes, with most of those persons who have bestowed attention on the subject, that the extension and real application of the law of the vilayets will offer a better prospect than any other scheme that has been proposed of leading to a better provincial administration and to the improvement of the condition of the people.

On the other hand, from reports received from Her Majesty's Consuls, it appears that the Medjlisses, or Provincial Councils, are constantly used as the means of local oppression and extortion by a certain number of the influential persons of the district who play into each others hands, confine the elections to their own relatives or dependants, connive with the tax farmers, and are able, by bribery and intrigue, to defy the authority of any Governor-General who may seek to interfere with them.

Nothing would be gained by giving the control of the taxation to bodies such as these are described to be, and it is on the control of the local funds that the local administration of affairs must naturally depend.

The improvement of the condition of the rural population forms the fifth point in Count Andrassy's note. The best means of effecting this will indisputably be by a general amelioration of the condition of the whole population, urban as well as rural, by the realization of practical reforms, and the establishment of such institutions as those which Her Majesty's Government have proposed in the Conference basis.

Count Andrassy suggested the execution of measures in imitation of those which he stated had been taken some years ago in Bulgaria, where the landlords' dues had been bought up by means of the issue of public obligations, and also that it might be possible to make some arrangement for the peasants to acquire on easy terms portions of the waste lands which the State puts up for sale.

The question of the relations between landlord and tenant in these provinces is one of great difficulty, from the peculiar nature of the tenure of land, as the feudal system, which formerly existed in Turkey, and which was not abolished by law until the Tanzimat of 1839, appears to have continued in practice in Bosnia, to a great extent, up to the time when the insurrection of the Begs was suppressed by the Porte in 1850, and the feudal rights of the landlords compounded for by pensions and annuities.

Under this system the land was divided into three classes: (1.) Lands held by those who embraced Islamism (this is the case in Bosnia); (2.) Lands held by those tribes or provinces which had capitulated or submitted to Turkish rule; (3.) Lands taken by arms. The lands held by Mussulmans were subject to "uchur" (dime, or tithe). Those held by others to "kharadj" (tribute). Lands taken by arms were subject to one or the other, as they might be granted for life, or in freehold, to Mussulmans or non-Mussul-

mans. The "uchur" was a fixed charge, the "kharadj" depended on the will of the Sultan. Both were levied on the produce, and depended on the harvest, &c. The Mussulman landlords undertook the defence of the country, and exercised seigniorial rights, levying fines and taxes on the peasantry, who were attached by prescription to the soil.

From this system a practice has grown up of paying rent, and even taxes, in kind, and no doubt many existing abuses are to be traced to it.

On the 21st of April, 1858, a new law was promulgated, providing that land in Turkey should be classed in five categories:—1. Land "mulk," freehold. 2. Land "mirüè," property of the State. 3. Land "mevqoufè," mosque and charity lands, in mortmain. 4. Land "metrouké," common lands. 5. Land "mévât," waste lands.

The second comprises the lands for which the feudal lord could formerly grant leases. These are now granted by the Government authorities. The fourth consists of the highways and common pasturages, and the fifth of uncultivated mountains and rocky wastes. Any one is allowed to redeem the waste lands, but if cultivated they become liable to a fine upon payment of which a lease is granted.

Your Excellency will obtain full information with regard to the operations of this law, and any improvements required in it, from Mr. Consul Holmes, who has been desired to meet your Excellency at Constantinople. Her Majesty's Government cannot undertake to do more than generally indicate, for your Excellency's information, the condition of this very important question of the tenure of land, which can only be dealt with after careful inquiry, and with due consideration for local necessities. Among the abuses which your Excellency will find the subject of complaint is the administration of the Mosque lands, which are granted by a system of "vakouf" to favoured Mussulmans, and often allowed to remain in a neglected state, to the injury of the neighbourhood.

As Her Majesty's Government indicated in their reply to the proposals of Count Andrassy, the points which his Excellency recommended for adoption by the Porte are already covered in principle by the Hatti-Humayoun and other Decrees of the Porte.

Besides these Decrees, which were for universal application to the whole Empire, the Porte has at various times granted special institutions to provinces where the necessity for them has been proved.

On the 10th December, 1832, the Porte, by a note addressed to the Representatives of Great Britain, France, and Russia, accorded certain concessions, including an amnesty, to the people of Samos, on condition of their submitting faithfully to the Ottoman rule. A Council of Notables was to exercise the Government of the island under a Prince of the same religion as the people, no troops were to be kept in the island, and privileges were granted in regard to navigation and port dues. The Samians were to pay an annual tribute of 400,000 piastres to the Porte.

At the Conferences held at Paris in 1860, relative to the armed intervention for the restoration of tranquillity in Syria, it was agreed that there should be a special Règlement for the administration of the Lebanon. This was not finally settled till the 5th September, 1864.

It was provided that the Lebanon should be administered by a Christian Governor named by the Porte, with an Administrative Council composed of twelve members from the different communes, according to their religious distribution, Maronites and Druses, one Mussulman, two orthodox Greeks, and one Catholic Greek.

There were also to be three Tribunals composed in similar proportions; and the Porte decreed the equality of all before the law, and the abolition of all feudal privileges.

In 1867 the Porte issued an Imperial Firman for the reorganization of Crete after the insurrection there. For two years from the 1st March, 1868, the tithe (dime) was remitted entirely, and after that reduced for two years further to one-half.

The Island of Crete was divided into sandjaks, cazas, and communes under a Vali, assisted by an Administrative Council, composed of two Councillors, the Chief Magistrate, the Greek Metropolitan, the Director of the Finances, the Directors of Correspondence, and six other members, three Mussulmans, and three non-Mussulmans, elected by their respective communities. Similar provisions were made for the Councils of the sandjaks, with this provision, that in the sandjaks exclusively Christian the Councils should be composed, under the presidency of the Mutessarifs (Governors), of three officials, the Bishop, and six Christian members elected by the population.

The tribunals of the chief town and of the mixed sandjaks and cazas were to be composed of elective Mussulman and Christian members. In the sandjaks or cazas exclusively Christian the tribunals were to be composed entirely of Christians. There was

also to be a general elective Council, composed of two Christian delegates from the Christian cazas, two Mussulman delegates from the Mussulman cazas, and one Mussulman delegate from each mixed caza.

This scheme of administration for Crete has given rise to some dissatisfaction among the Christian population, owing to the manner in which the Porte has exercised its powers of appointing the Kaimakams and the Presidents of the Tribunals, by which a predominance has been given to the Mussulmans, incommensurate with their relative numbers. The Christian officials nominated are said to have been of so low a class as to render the more respectable of the Christian inhabitants unwilling to serve or be associated with them. Copies of despatches on this subject by Mr. Consul Sandwith are inclosed herewith.*

In the basis laid down for the Conference, a distinction has been drawn between the case of Bosnia and the Herzegovina and that of Bulgaria.

The circumstances of the several districts are, indeed, so different as to make it difficult to propose any measures of reform which would in their details be suitable to all alike. In Bosnia the population is reported to be nearly equally divided into Mussulmans and Christians, with a proportion among the latter of Roman Catholics. In the Herzegovina the majority of the population is Christian, but in both provinces the Mussulmans are, and have always been, the ruling race, and, in spite of the events of 1850 and 1858, still hold the greater part of the landed property. As the insurrection in these provinces has led to the existing state of affairs, their pacification is of immediate necessity. At the same time the cruelty with which the attempted rising in the Balkans was suppressed has aroused the indignation of the civilized world, and made it equally imperative that the recurrence of such outrages should be adequately guarded against.

Some confusion has been occasioned by the use of the generic name Bulgaria, in regard to the places where these outrages were committed. Tatar Bazardjik and the majority of the places where these atrocities were committed, are situated in mountainous districts, south of the Balkan range, in the vilayet of Adrianople, in Roumelia. Although there have been disturbances in the Northern Balkans, the vilayet of the Danube, commonly known as Bulgaria, extending from Widdin to the mouth of the river, has remained tranquil.

It was in this province of the Danube that the system of vilayets was first introduced, under the able administration of Midhat Pasha, and care will have to be taken not to disturb unnecessarily institutions which may have proved to be efficiently organized.

It is all the more important to bear this distinction between the vilayets in mind, as the proposals of the Russian Government for the occupation of Bulgaria had in view the intervention of a foreign military force and the suppression of the local Government in the vilayet of the Danube, where such measures have, in reality, been the least called for.

In a despatch addressed to Sir H. Elliot on the 21st of September Her Majesty's Government instructed his Excellency to recommend as a provisional measure, and without prejudice to such future arrangements as may be made in concert with the Powers, that the disturbed districts should be at once placed under an able and energetic Commissioner specially appointed for the purpose, who, if not himself a Christian, should have Christian counsellors in whom trust could be reposed by the Christian population.

Her Majesty's Government have not heard that any steps have been taken to carry this recommendation into effect, but it would have afforded a proof, unfortunately wanting, of the determination of the Porte to act energetically without foreign pressure.

In the absence of any such effort on the part of the Porte to effectually repair the injuries which the apathy and misconduct of the local officials allowed to be inflicted on the Christian population, Her Majesty's Government have felt compelled to consider the means which may be best adapted for ensuring the reform of the administration in the districts affected, as well as in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and it will probably be found that such measures, in order to be effectual, will have to be extended over the whole vilayet of Adrianople and possibly of the Danube also.

Besides giving the population some control over their own local affairs, the Conference basis provides that there shall be guarantees against the exercise of arbitrary authority in Bosnia and Herzegovina and also against maladministration in Bulgaria.

* Consul Sandwith, No. 14, May 29. Ditto, No. 16, June 5. Ditto, No. 26, August 14.

[Editor's note: No. 14 is Docs. 375 and 376 in this volume; No. 16 is Docs. 377, 378 and 379 in this volume; and No. 26 is Docs. 399, 400 and 401 in Volume 2.]

The whole history of the Ottoman Empire since it was admitted into the European concert, under the engagements of the Treaty of Paris, has proved that the Porte is unable to guarantee the execution of reforms in the Provinces by Turkish officials, who accept them with reluctance, and neglect them with impunity.

It has, therefore, become requisite to aim, in the present crisis of affairs, at an agreement between the Powers and the Porte for the establishment of some system of reforms in the provinces whose administration will come under discussion, which shall combine the elective principle with external guarantees for efficient administration.

Her Majesty's Government do not desire to hamper your Excellency's discretion in the approaching discussions by any detailed plan for such a scheme of reforms, but it may be useful to indicate generally the points in which the existing system of administration in the provinces might be strengthened and improved.

The vilayets might be placed under Valis whose nomination by the Porte should, as a temporary arrangement, be subject to the approval of the Ambassadors of the Guaranteeing Powers, or a majority of them. The office of Vali to be tenable for a period of say seven years, and the Vali irremovable, except on conviction of crime, or proved corruption, or incapacity, and then only with the concurrence of the Ambassadors, or a majority of them.

The Provincial Councils or Medjlisses, whose machinery seems unnecessarily cumbrous, might be supplemented or superseded by General Councils for each vilayet, to be elected by the votes of the population of each Caza: the number of members to be proportioned to the population, and to be divided into Mussulmans and non-Mussulmans in the same ratio. The last Firman has decreed a General Council for the whole Empire, and these General Provincial Councils might be elected by the same suffrage, and meet at the chief town or other locality which may be most convenient and accessible.

The Mutessarifs to be nominated by the Porte, subject for the present to veto by the Ambassadors, or a majority of them, who would be advised by the Consuls. The Mutesarifs to hold office on a similar tenure to the Vali.

The Kaimakams to be selected by the Vali from members of the General Provincial Council, or some other security taken that they should be persons possessing the confidence of the population. In Cazas where the majority are non-Mussulmans, the Kaimakam to be a non-Mussulman, and *vice versâ*.

The law of the Vilayets provided that—

At the chief town of every vilayet a High Court should be established, presided over by the chief Magistrate and composed of six members, three Mussulmans and three non-Mussulmans. This High Court was to deal with all causes on appeal with the exception of suits between Mussulmans on appeal from the Cheri, or between non-Mussulmans on appeal from the special Courts of the non-Mussulman communities.

A High Court of Commerce was to be also established at each chief town.

Each sandjak was to have a Tribunal composed of the Cadi and six members, three Mussulmans and three non-Mussulmans, who are elective. Its jurisdiction to be restricted in the same manner as the Superior Court of the vilayet.

In each Caza there was to be a Court of First Instance, composed, under the presidency of the Cadi, of elective members, three Mussulmans and three non-Mussulmans, with similar restricted jurisdiction.

The Firman of October 12, 1875, introduced considerable alterations in these Provincial Tribunals. The Judges were made elective, the Presidents of the Tribunals were to be chosen from the most capable persons, and the principle of the Judges being irremovable, was recognized with other reforms.

Her Majesty's Government doubt whether the plan of elective Judges, except in the case of the inferior Magistrates, is likely to be beneficial, and consider that it might be well to supplement it by establishing a Central Court at the chief town of the vilayets, the Judges of which should be irremovable and appointed for life, or for a fixed term of years, and should be selected by the Porte, subject, for the present, to the veto of the Ambassadors. Although the Magistrates of the minor Courts might continue to be elective, provision should be made that the Presidents should be Mussulman or non-Mussulman according to the population; and that neither the Judges of the Central Court nor the Presidents of the minor Courts should be selected except from persons possessing adequate judicial experience and legal training.

At the same time the jurisdiction over landed property should be removed from the Mussulman Courts, in cases in which non-Mussulmans are exclusively concerned, to non-Mussulman Courts; and in mixed cases to Mixed Courts, subject in both instances to appeal to the Central Provincial Court. The Codes of Law should also be translated and published in the local languages.

If, moreover, a higher Court of Appeal could be constituted at Constantinople, in which the Porte would consent to employ a proportion of foreign Judges, the benefit to the whole Empire would presumably be great, and the means be provided for training Turkish officials for employment in the provinces.

By the Hatti-Humayoun all the subjects of the Empire, without distinction, were to be received into the civil and military schools of the Government, if they otherwise satisfied the conditions as to age and examination which were specified in the Organic Regulations of the schools. Moreover, every community was authorized to establish public schools of Science, Art and Industry. Only the method of instruction and the choice of Professors in schools of this class were to be under the control of a Mixed Council of Public Instruction, the members of which were to be named by the Porte.

It is doubtful how far these provisions have been carried into actual execution, and the establishment of efficient schools for the Christian population would properly be included in the matters to be considered in regulating the reforms required in the provinces.

Among the causes of disaffection in the provinces none has been more general than the arbitrary misconduct of the Mussulman *zaptiehs* or police, and it will be probably proved indispensable that a proportion of Christians should be employed for the future both as officers and men. The local police service may also require re-organization in other respects, as contemplated in the Hatti-Houmayoun, in addition to the reforms promised in the Instructions of Server Pasha of October 6, 1875. The chief officers should be made permanent, and their appointment subjected to some form of guarantee for their efficiency.

The Hatti-Humayoun likewise provided that the equality of taxes entails equality of burdens, as equality of duties entails that of rights. Christian subjects, it is stated, and those of other non-Mussulman sects, should, as well as Mussulman, be subject to the obligations of the Law of Recruitment. The principle of obtaining substitutes, or of purchasing exemption, was to be admitted, and a complete law was to be published, with as little delay as possible, respecting the admission into and service in the army of Christian and other non-Mussulman subjects.

An attempt was made to carry out this provision, but it was abandoned, and the capitation tax on Christians substituted. This has recently been made less onerous, but the opinion has generally been expressed by Sir H. Elliot and others that no real equality can be secured between the Mussulmans and Christians so long as the latter are excluded from bearing arms in the military service of the country.

The reasons of the Porte for feeling suspicious of non-Mussulman soldiers and police can easily be understood, as well as the reluctance of the Christians, in many cases, to be included in the conscription; but, nevertheless, it would be very desirable that some arrangement should be arrived at for constituting a system for the enrolment of non-Mussulmans in the army or local militia, either in separate regiments or battalions, or in some other way which should preserve them from being marked out for ill-usage by their Mussulman comrades, and should admit of non-Mussulman officers attaining due rank and distinction in the service. The Mussulmans should be at the same time subjected to the same prohibitions in respect of carrying arms as are now imposed on the Christians.

The question of local taxation has already been referred to. In order to secure the control of the local finances a provincial Treasury might be established at the principal towns of the vilayets, into which the taxes and local rates should be paid. The 16th Article of the *Règlement* for the Lebanon provides that the cost of administration and expenses of public utility shall be a first charge on the taxation of that district, and a similar regulation might be made for these provinces. The Provincial General Councils, or Assemblies, might have the right of voting the local taxes, subject to the concurrence of the Vali, or Governor, in such a way that, after the balance of Imperial taxes had been paid over, the province should be financially independent of the Constantinople Ministry of Finance.

Her Majesty's Government have not endeavoured to offer more than the outline of a system of local self-government, in which they have aimed at the establishment of provincial administration under Governors whose ability and integrity would be vouched for by the guarantee of a diplomatic veto, acting with provincial elective assemblies having control over the local taxation, with permanent judges and other higher officials appointed under a similar guarantee, and with a reformed system of local militia and police, the removal of any remaining Christian disabilities, the improvement of the land laws, and the amelioration of the condition of the whole agricultural population.

Her Majesty's Government believe that if some such system of local self-government could be established, it would form the best guarantee for the well-being of these provinces, and open the way to the general adoption of reformed and constitutional Government throughout the Turkish Empire.

Having thus stated the nature of the guarantees which Her Majesty's Government consider may fairly be demanded of the Porte, it remains for me to state explicitly that Her Majesty's Government cannot countenance the introduction into the Conference of proposals, however plausible or well-intentioned, which would bring foreign armies into Turkish territory in violation of the engagements by which the Guaranteeing Powers are solemnly bound.

In authorizing your Excellency to declare this determination on the part of Her Majesty's Government at the Conference, should occasion require it, they desire at the same time that it should be understood by the Porte that Great Britain is resolved not to sanction misgovernment and oppression, and that if the Porte by obstinacy or apathy opposes the efforts which are now making to place the Ottoman Empire on a more secure basis, the responsibility of the consequences which may ensue will rest solely with the Sultan and his advisers.

The Queen relies upon this country being represented by your Excellency and Sir H. Elliot in the Conference with discretion, judgment, and firmness, and trusts that the result of its deliberations may be to secure the welfare of the population of Turkey and the preservation of the peace of Europe.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 374

The Earl of Derby to the Marquis of Salisbury.

(No. 2.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, November 20, 1876.

I HAVE the honour to inclose, for your Excellency's information, a copy of a despatch to his Excellency Sir Henry Elliot,* requesting him to consider the instructions with which your Excellency has been furnished as equally addressed to himself, and explaining that the scheme of local self-government for the Turkish provinces concerned therein indicated is to be taken only as an outline, and subject to such alterations and amendments as may be suggested for the consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 375

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 17.)

(No. 14. Political.)

My Lord,

Canea, Crete, May 29, 1876.

I HAVE the honour to transmit, for your Lordship's information, a copy of a despatch which I have addressed to his Excellency Sir Henry Elliot, giving a list of the principal changes which the representatives of the Cretan Christians desire to see introduced into the Organic Law.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

Doc. 376

Inclosure in Doc. 375.

Consul Sandwith to Sir H. Elliot.

Sir,

Canea, Crete, May 28, 1876.

IN my despatch of the 22nd instant, I had the honour to state to your Excellency that that day had been fixed for the Christian half of the General Assembly to present to Raouf Pasha the modifications they desired to see introduced into the Organic Law. These modifications, however, were of so extensive a character, affecting

almost every part of the law in question, that one day was found quite inadequate for their consideration, and the whole week has been occupied in going over, one by one, the articles of the law, which, when it was promulgated eight years ago, was thought to be a liberal concession to the Christian Islanders.

The further concessions now demanded by the latter have all been entered in the Minutes of Proceedings of the Assembly, forming a voluminous document in modern Greek, a translation of which it is impossible to prepare for transmission by this post, as the meetings were only brought to a conclusion yesterday, and the post leaves to-morrow morning. I therefore confine myself on the present occasion to giving your Excellency a list of the principal demands made by the representatives of the Christians, reserving the fuller consideration of them for the following post.

1st. They demand that the people shall be entitled to elect representatives for the General Assembly, in proportion to the relative numbers of the two sects in the several districts, thereby giving a great preponderance of Christian Deputies.

2nd. That the Administrative Council (Idaré Mejlis) sitting at Canea shall be formed of the Governor-General (Vali), as President, and of six members elected by the General Assembly, four Christians, and two Mussulmans, and that all those Government employés who at present sit there by virtue of their office shall be excluded. That the District Administrative Councils shall be constituted on the same principle.

3rd. That, inasmuch as the Vali who sanctions the decisions of the various tribunals is a Mahommedan, the President of the Appellate Court which sits at Canea, and the Presidents of the Courts of First Instance and of Commerce, holding their sittings in the chief towns of Canea, Candia, and Rethymo, shall be Christians, the four judges of the said Courts being, as at present, two of them Christians and two Mussulmans.

4. That in the districts (kazas) where the majority of the inhabitants are Christian, the Presidents and three of the Judges shall be Christian, the remaining Judge being a Mussulman. That in those districts where the majority are Mussulman (this obtains in one only), the same proportion shall be observed in favour of Mussulmans.

5. They demand that Kaïmakams (Governors of districts or kazas) shall henceforth be chosen from among Cretans and appointed by the Porte instead of at present by the Vali (this being a recent innovation), and that before entering upon the duties of their posts, their fitness for their posts must be pronounced by the Administrative Council.

6. That Mouavins (assistants attached to each Kaïmakam) shall be appointed by the Vali, also selected from among natives, their fitness for their posts being likewise decided by the same Council.

7. That inasmuch as the Governor-General is a Mahommedan, the post of Mussulman Councillor (Mushaver) be suppressed, the office of Christian Councillor being alone retained.

8. That the corps of zaptiés be recruited exclusively from the natives of the island in proportion to the respective numbers of the two religious communities, and that, instead of their superior officers (consisting of a Colonel and four Majors) all belonging to the dominant faith, two of the latter shall be Christians. (Of the 2,800 zaptiés enrolled, upwards of 2,000 are at present Albanians.)

9. That the Defterdar and the four Muassabéjis (Director and sub-Directors of the Financial Department) shall have each a Christian clerk attached to them, and that a Budget of the receipts and expenditure of the Administration shall be annually presented to the General Assembly, the same items of which shall be submitted for their consideration and approval.

10. Larger powers are demanded for the Christian Demogerontias, Courts which administer the properties and protect the interests of minors and orphans, and in some instances of pious foundations. They demand that the decisions of these Courts shall be binding.

Lastly, they desire that the sittings of the General Assembly shall be open to the public.

Such are the principal of the radical reforms which the chosen leaders of the Cretan Christians have decided to ask of the Porte. They have been elaborated by the town deputies, chiefly lawyers and doctors educated at Athens, men who were excluded from the Assembly when the towns were virtually deprived of their franchise in 1869. Now that they have recovered the right of returning their own members, these latter at once acquired that ascendancy over their rural colleagues which superior intelligence never fails to command, and this in spite of the unrelenting efforts of the authorities to

create distrust and suspicion among them. Government agents have been sent to different parts of the country to induce some of the inhabitants to express their disapproval of the measures proposed by their representatives, but the general effect of these efforts has been to heighten the enthusiasm in their favour. Perfect accord has not, however, always reigned amongst them, and compromises have in certain cases had to be made in order to prevent disunion. In the Article, for instance, which demands not only that a Christian shall be President of the District Courts, but that three of the four Judges should also be Christians, the deputies of the towns were in favour of the Judges being equal in number. Their country colleagues, however, threatened to withdraw their support if their wishes in this matter were not respected, and the others were obliged to yield.

These meetings of the past week have been held in the absence of the Mussulman deputies, for fear of provoking unseemly disputes. The latter, who are, of course, advised of the proceedings of their Christian colleagues, are in no submissive mood, and are sparing no pains to prevent the acceptance of the demands of their rivals at Constantinople. Both parties seem sanguine of success, and it will be no easy problem for the Porte to devise such a compromise as shall satisfy the Christians without exasperating the Mussulmans.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWICH.

Doc. 377 *Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received June 20.)

(No. 16. Political.)

My Lord,

Canea, Crete, June 5, 1876.

I have the honour to transmit, for your Lordship's information, a copy of a despatch which I have addressed to his Excellency Sir Henry Elliot, accompanying a full translation of the modifications which the Christian Deputies of the General Assembly desire to see introduced into the Organic Law of Crete.

I have, &c.

(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

Doc. 378

Inclosure in Doc. 377.

Consul Sandwith to Sir H. Elliot.

Sir,

Canea, Crete, June 5, 1876.

IN my despatch of the 28th ultimo I had the honour to report to your Excellency the changes which the Christians of Crete, speaking through their chosen representatives, desire to see introduced into the Organic Law.

A translation of the entire Minutes of Proceedings, of which I then gave an extract, I have now the honour to annex, embodied with which is a translation of an address to the Grand Vizier, drawn up in very outspoken language, which forms a sort of "pièce justificative" for their boldness in proposing these changes in the Organic Law. The imperfect manner in which that Law has been carried out, and the abuses of an Administration which have brought about a general and deep-seated discontent, are not obscurely hinted at in this latter document, in which reference is made to the Report addressed to the ex-Sultan by the late Aali Pasha, where that Statesman announced to his sovereign the granting of the Organic Law to Crete. His Highness there speaks of the new Law as having conferred self-government on the Cretans, the whole Report being much more liberal in its tone than the Law itself, the provisions of which, even if loyally carried out, are far from answering to the idea conveyed by the term "self-government."

Last week having been given up to feasting and rejoicing, the sittings of the General Assembly have been momentarily suspended. The ordinary duties of that body are now to be proceeded with, but the Christian Deputies, I understand, expect an answer to their demands before proceeding to the election of the members of the Administrative Council, the relative numbers of which, as representing the two creeds, the new propositions brought forward by the Christians will materially modify.

I have, &c.

(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

Doc. 379

Inclosure in Doc. 377.

Changes to be introduced into the Organic Law of Crete, as proposed by the Christian Deputies of the General Assembly.

(Traduction.)

Chapitre I.—*Modifications sur le Chapitre I^{er} du Statut Organique, soumis d'un commun accord par tous les Députés Chrétiens aux Delibérations de l'Assemblée Générale.*

Article 1. L'ASSEMBLEE Générale, ayant pour base la proportion de la population Musulmane et Chrétienne de l'île, est désormais composée des représentants des différents cantons et des trois villes de la Canée, Rethymo, et Candie, lesquels représentants sont convoqués au chef-lieu du vilayet le 1^{er} Mai de chaque année.

Chaque canton ou ville doit élire quatre Députés dont les deux seront Musulmans et les deux autres Chrétiens, si le canton ou la ville est habité exactement par autant de Musulmans que de Chrétiens; mais si la population d'un canton ou d'une ville appartenant à l'une de ces deux religions est supérieure en nombre à l'autre, dans ce cas la première élira trois Députés et la moins considérable un seul. Les cantons

habités exclusivement par des Musulmans ou des Chrétiens, choisiront quatre Députés, qui seront Musulmans ou Chrétiens.

L'Article 2 est compris dans l'Article 1.

Art. 3. Dans chaque canton ou district, l'élection des Députés se fait par les Démogérones des villages convoqués à cet effet le 1^{er} Avril de la même année par circulaires des Gouverneurs ou sous-Gouverneurs. Le mode d'élection dans les villes sera le même que par le passé et conforme aux usages locaux. Toutes les élections en général doivent être terminées le second Dimanche du mois d'Avril.

Art. 4. La réunion des Démogérones ainsi que des électeurs dans les villes, ne sera considérée comme légalement et dûment constituée et elle ne pourra procéder à l'élection des Députés, si les deux tiers au moins de ses membres Chrétiens ou Musulmans ne s'y trouveraient présents. Dans le cas contraire, les Gouverneurs ou les Sous-Gouverneurs devront ajourner l'élection jusqu'à l'autre Dimanche, en prévenant les électeurs par écrit que les élections auront absolument lieu, quelque soit le nombre des électeurs présents.

Art. 5. L'Assemblée des Démogérones dans les cantons comme dans les villes, sera toujours présidée, dans les chefs-lieux de districts ou de cantons, par les Gouverneurs ou les Caïmacams qui, sous aucun prétexte, ne doivent jamais intervenir dans les élections ; ils veilleront seulement à l'ordre des discussions, du vote et à la prompte et régulière rédaction des procès-verbaux de l'élection de chaque Député.

Art. 6. Les Démogérones Chrétiens éliront les Députés Chrétiens et les Démogérones Musulmans leurs Députés coreligionnaires. L'élection de chaque candidat a lieu séparément par voie de scrutin, et on doit prendre en considération la pluralité des voix.

Art. 7. Les Députés sont élus pour une période de deux ans.

Art. 8. Les Députés qui auront fini leur temps peuvent être réélus pour une autre période. Dans le cas où quelque député donnerait sa démission, viendrait à mourir, ou bien aura été mis, par quelque empêchement, dans l'impossibilité de remplir sa mission, l'Assemblée des Démogérones devra pourvoir à son remplacement.

Art. 9. Sont éligibles tous ceux qui sont inscrits sur les listes mentionnées dans l'Article 8 du Règlement Administratif et dressées par les Gouverneurs et les sous-Gouverneurs. Il n'est point indispensable qu'un Député habite dans le canton où il a été élu ; il suffit qu'il soit domicilié en Crète.

Art. 12. Les Députés doivent se réunir à la Canée le 1^{er} Mai de chaque année. Dans le cas où un Député ne se trouvera pas présent à la date susmentionnée, ou il ne s'empresserait pas de justifier son absence par quelque empêchement plausible, le Gouverneur-Général, d'un commun accord avec la majorité de l'Assemblée, doit inviter le Gouverneur ou le sous-Gouverneur de la circonscription à procéder à l'élection d'un autre Député, si le représentant absent continuerait à ne pas comparaître jusqu'au 7 Mai.

Art. 13. Le candidat qui serait élu Député dans deux circonscriptions différentes devra opter pour l'une ou pour l'autre dans l'espace de cinq jours, à dater du jour où il aurait reçu communication du procès-verbal de sa seconde élection. Dans le cas contraire, le Gouverneur-Général et l'Assemblée Générale ordonnent une autre élection conformément à l'Article précédent.

Art. 14. Tous les Députés recevront de la caisse du Gouvernement chacun 1,000 piastres pour chaque session, et 15 piastres par jour depuis le 1^{er} Mai jusqu'au jour où l'Assemblée terminerait ses travaux.

Nul employé recevant un traitement quelconque ne pourra être élu Député, à moins qu'il ne renonce par écrit à son emploi trois mois avant les élections.

Chapitre II.

Art. 15. Le jour fixé pour l'ouverture de l'Assemblée Générale, c'est-à-dire le 1^{er} Mai, les Députés sont convoqués sous la présidence du Gouverneur-Général, qui annonce le commencement des travaux par écrit après avoir reçu les mandats de tous les Députés.

Si la validité de l'élection de quelques Députés venait à être contestée, le Gouverneur-Général et les Députés légalement élus procèdent à la vérification des pouvoirs contestés. Et si l'élection est reconnue valable par la majorité de l'Assemblée, le nom du Député est inscrit sur la liste contenant les noms de ses collègues ; dans le cas contraire, l'élection est annulée et on procède au remplacement du Député irrégulièrement choisi, conformément à l'Article 12.

Art. 16. Les séances de l'Assemblée Générale sont publiques. L'Article 17 reste sans modification.

Art. 18. Les séances générales de l'Assemblée sont présidées par le Gouverneur-Général ou par son Conseiller, en cas d'empêchement. Dans les séances partielles les représentants Chrétiens ou Musulmans choisissent leur Président et leur bureaux.

Art. 19. Les séances générales ou partielles ne peuvent être considérées comme légalement constituées si la moitié plus un des Députés ne s'y trouveraient présents.

Attributions du Président de l'Assemblée.

Art. 20. Le Président de l'Assemblée Générale dirige les séances générales, veille à l'ordre qui y doit régner, donne la parole à chaque Député à tour de rôle et impose silence, s'il y a lieu, aux Députés et à l'auditoire.

Art. 21. Aucun Député ne peut prendre part à la discussion avant de s'être fait inscrire et y avoir été autorisé par la Président.

Art. 22. Lorsqu'il y a divergence d'opinion sur une question quelconque, le Président a recours aux scrutins et la question est résolue par la majorité des voix.

Art. 23. Les discussions se font en Grec et en Turc.

Art. 24. Les procès-verbaux de l'Assemblée, qui seront rédigés en Grec et en Turc, doivent être lus dans la séance suivante et après que l'on aura fait en marge, s'il y a lieu, les corrections nécessaires, on passera à l'examen d'autres questions.

Art. 25. Immédiatement après la vérification des pouvoirs et la constitution légale de l'Assemblée, le Gouverneur-Général et les Députés déposeront sur les bureaux du Président les divers projets qui devront être examinés et discutés durant la session. Ainsi constituée l'Assemblée Générale procède à la formation de Commissions Mixtes composées de sept membres pour l'examen de chaque question ; elle fixe aussi, par pluralité de voix et pour cause d'urgence, la discussion sur certaines questions. L'élection des membres du Conseil Administratif et du Tribunal d'Appel auront lieu cinq jours avant la clôture de l'Assemblée. Ces Conseillers et Magistrats seront choisis séparément par leurs députés co-religionnaires.

Art. 26. Chaque session de l'Assemblée Générale doit durer quarante jours ; mais si la majorité de cette Assemblée demande une prorogation de dix jours, on pourra la lui accorder par Ordonnance Impériale.

Chapitre III.—Compétence de l'Assemblée Générale.

Art. 27. L'Assemblée Générale est compétente pour examiner et discuter tout ce qui se rapporte directement ou indirectement au bien-être de l'île et à la stricte application de la part du pouvoir exécutif de ses résolutions. L'Assemblée s'occupera aussi de tout ce qui concerne les voies de communication, les travaux d'utilité publique, les fondations de banques agricoles et commerciales, conformément à la teneur du Firman Impérial du 16 Zilhidié, 1287 (28 Février, 1868), ainsi que d'autres objets qui ont pour but le développement du commerce et de l'industrie, de l'agriculture et de l'instruction publique. L'Assemblée a également le droit de contrôler le budget de l'île pour l'exercice de l'année passée et de l'année prochaine. A l'Article 28 est ajouté seulement, après les mots fonctionnaires religieux, "à l'érection et réparation."

Art. 29. Sans modification, Article 30, idem ; Article 31, idem ; Article 32, idem.

Art. 33. Un résumé des débats et des procès-verbaux doit être publié par le Secrétaire de l'Assemblée dans le journal officiel du vilayet.

Art. 34. A cet Article est ajouté "toute contravention sera qualifiée par la majorité de l'Assemblée."

Art. . Article dernier. Toutes les fois que la majorité de l'Assemblée croira devoir procéder à la révision et à la modification des présentes lois organiques, l'autorisation lui en sera accordée par Décret Impérial.

Chapitre I.—Démogéronties centrales Chrétiennes.

Dans chaque chef-lieu de Gouvernement (Moutessarifik) il y aura une Démogérontie pour les habitants Chrétiens. Chacune de ces Démogéronties est composée du Chef Spirituel du District, qui en est aussi le Président, et de quatre membres choisis pour une période de trois ans, parmi les habitants Chrétiens du district convoqués à cet effet le 1 Avril, et qui doivent élire quatre fondés de pouvoir. Un nombre égal de procureurs est aussi choisi par les villes de la Canée, Rethymo et Candie de la même manière dont sont élus les Députés de l'Assemblée Générale. Tous ces électeurs qui sont convoqués

au chef-lieu du district le 20 Avril, procèdent à l'élection des quatre membres qui doivent composer la Démogérontie. Dans les districts où il existe plusieurs sièges épiscopaux, le Président de la Démogérontie sera désigné par son Eminence le Métropolitain.

Les Démogéronties centrales sont réglées uniformément par un règlement qui sera élaboré par les cinq Démogéronties centrales de l'île sous la présidence de Monseigneur le Métropolitain.

Chapitre II.—*Compétence et attributions des Démogéronties Centrales.*

Les Démogéronties Chrétiennes qui seront instituées dans les chefs-lieux des districts auront vis-à-vis de tous les Chrétiens les mêmes attributions que les Démogéronties de villages. Elles doivent principalement juger d'après les lois ecclésiastiques Chrétiennes en vigueur tout différend en matière de succession qui surgirait entre Chrétiens sans que le Mehkémé ou l'Efcap puissent en aucune manière y intervenir. Les Démogéronties connaîtront, aussi comme par le passé, de tout ce qui a trait au droit Chrétien sur l'hoirie, comme donations, etc.; elles dresseront les actes de donations et les testaments des Chrétiens, jugeront toutes contestations qui surgiraient entre ces derniers et administreront la fortune pécuniaire des orphelins Chrétiens et de ceux qui se trouvent en état d'interdiction. Les jugements émis par les Démogéronties centrales, dans les limites de leur juridiction et compétence s'ils sont prononcés en dernier ressort, doivent être exécutés par les Tribunaux Civiles de l'île sans aucun délai ni intervention, et sans que le pouvoir exécutif puisse s'ingérer dans tout ce qui se rapporte à des questions d'hoirie. Les Démogéronties dont il s'agit décident en dernier ressort tout procès jusqu'à la somme de 5,000 piastres, au contestation dont il ne serait pas possible de déterminer la valeur. Les décisions qui seraient rendues pour une somme dépassant les 5,000 piastres, sont appellables. Pour les jugements de cette catégorie il sera institués un Tribunal d'Appel sous la présidence de son Eminence le Métropolitain de Crète.

L'élection et les attributions des membres de ce Tribunal d'Appel, son siège et la durée de ses travaux, ainsi que les émoluments de ses membres et de son secrétaire, seront fixés dans un autre règlement qui sera élaboré par les membres des cinq Démogéronties et par un délégué spécial de chaque canton qui sera choisi par les habitants. Cette Commission de délégués sera placée sous la présidence du Métropolitain.

Indépendamment de l'appel, les décisions des Démogéronties Centrales pourraient être révoquées par le Conseil National Mixte siégeant auprès du Patriarcat de Constantinople, mais jusqu'à ce que le Tribunal d'Appel sus-mentionné soit institué, les décisions des Démogéronties seront appellables par devant le Patriarcat, comme par le passé.

Les cinq Démogéronties Centrales seront régies par la même procédure civile en vigueur dans les Tribunaux de Première Instance pour ce qui concerne les délais, la révision, la suspension, et les autres formes juridiques.

Articles derniers.

Comme les Mehkémés de cette île n'ont le droit de connaître que seulement de quelques procès entre Musulmans, ils ne pourront, en aucun cas, empiéter sur les attributions et la juridiction ci-dessus indiquées des Démogéronties Centrales Chrétiennes.

La correspondance entre les Démogéronties et les cantons se fera toujours en Grec; en outre tout acte officiel devra leur être communiqué en traduction Grecque dûment légalisée.

Les Démogéronties Chrétiennes ont le droit d'avoir à leur service deux gendarmes payés par le Gouvernement.

Caisses des Orphelins Chrétiens.

La fortune des orphelins est administrée dans chaque district par une caisse spéciale placée sous la surveillance et agissant sous la responsabilité des Démogéronties. Ces caisses seront régies par le règlement qui a été élaboré par les cinq Démogéronties Centrales et soumis à la sanction de la Sublime Porte.

Les obligations pour prêts sur gages des caisses dont il s'agit seront écrites en Grec devant la Démogérontie et sur papier timbré, comme cela se pratique depuis treize ans, sans aucune espèce d'intervention de la part des Mehkémés. Ces obliga-

tions devront seulement être légalisées par les Conseils Administratifs des districts, qui y apposeront leurs cachets après avoir fait comparaître les débiteurs et leurs garants. Ainsi légalisés, ces actes auront la même valeur que les hadjets émanés des bureaux du Mehkémé. Cette procédure sera observée jusqu'à l'institution dans l'île des bureaux de notaires mentionnées dans les derniers Firmans Impériaux.

Il sera payé par les emprunteurs à l'office des Démogéronties un droit de un sur mille, qui servira à couvrir une partie de frais des Démogéronties et du Tribunal d'Appel qui devra être institué.

Les contrats de location pour les biens immeubles des orphelins et des monastères seront dressés en langue Grecque sur papier timbré; ils devront seulement être légalisés sans frais par les municipalités des districts. Le droit de 5 piastres qui est perçu pour la légalisation et celui de 1 pour cent sera prélevé par les Démogéronties Chrétiennes pour couvrir une partie des frais de ces Démogéronties et du Tribunal d'Appel.

Article dernier.

Pour ce qui concerne seulement les devoirs de tuteurs et la gestion de la fortune des mineurs, les Démogéronties sont placées sous la surveillance immédiate du Conseil Administratif du Gouvernement Général et sous celle prescrite par le Règlement Spécial sur les Démogéronties.

Chapitre I.—Règlement sur les Conseils Administratifs Mixtes.

Article 1. Sans modification.

Art. 2. Idem.

Art. 3. Idem.

Art. 4. Idem.

Art. 5. La gestion des affaires administratives pour toute l'île en général est confiée à un Gouverneur-Général nommée par Ordonnance Impériale et choisi parmi les fonctionnaires Musulmans ou Chrétiens Orthodoxes de la Sublime Porte. L'administration des districts ou Moutessarrifliks est confiée à des Gouverneurs nommés également par Ordonnance Impériale et dont la moitié sont choisis parmi les fonctionnaires Musulmans et l'autre moitié parmi les fonctionnaires Chrétiens de l'Empire. Chaque canton est administré par un Caïmacam nommé par le Gouvernement Impérial et choisi parmi ses employés Chrétiens ou Musulmans. Ces sous-Gouverneurs devront être nommé toujours sur la base du nombre des habitants des deux races; ils peuvent être déplacés, en cas de besoin, sur la proposition du Gouverneur, adopté par le Conseil Administratif.

Dans les cantons dont la population est entièrement Chrétienne ou Musulmane, les Caïmacams seront Chrétiens ou Musulmans.

Art. 6. Sans modification.

Art. 7. Le Gouverneur-Général est assisté d'un Conseil Administratif et d'un Conseiller nommé par Ordonnance Impériale et qui remplace le Gouverneur-Général en cas d'empêchement. Si le Gouverneur-Général est Musulman, son Conseiller doit être Chrétien, et si le Gouverneur-Général est Chrétien Orthodox son Conseiller doit être Musulman. Et comme le Gouvernement de la Canée n'a point de Gouverneur ni de Conseil Administratif, c'est le Gouverneur-Général et le Conseil Administratif du Vilayet qui rempliront ces fonctions.

Art. 8. Chaque Gouverneur de district a auprès de lui un Conseil Administratif et un Aide, qui remplace le Gouverneur en cas de besoin, et est nommé par Décret Impérial. L'Aide du Gouverneur Musulman doit être Chrétien, et celui du Gouverneur Chrétien doit être Musulman. Et puisque le canton où réside le Gouverneur n'aura point de Caïmacam ni de Conseil Administratif spécial, le Gouverneur doit remplir les fonctions de Caïmacam et son Conseil tiendra lieu de Conseil Cantonal.

Art. 9. Sans modification.

Art. 10. Idem.

Chapitre II.—Elections et Attributions du Conseil Administratif du Gouvernement Général.

Art. 11. Le pouvoir exécutif appartient exclusivement au Gouverneur-Général, qui doit l'exercer avec l'assistance des Gouverneurs, sous-Gouverneurs et Démogérontes, conformément aux lois de l'Empire, ou statut organique, et aux instructions qu'il aurait reçues.

Art. 12. Le Conseil Administratif qui se trouve placé sous la présidence du

Gouverneur-Général ou de son Conseiller, est composé de six membres élu par l'Assemblée Générale, et dont les quatre doivent être Chrétiens et les deux autres Musulmans. La moitié de ces membres tant Musulmans que Chrétiens est renouvelée chaque année.

Art. 13. Le Conseil Administratif ne pourra sous aucun prétexte exercer aucune des fonctions du pouvoir exécutif ou judiciaire. Ses attributions doivent être purement administratives. D'après le principe qui doit régler les rapports et les devoirs entre le Conseil Administratif et le Gouverneur-Général, l'action, l'exécution, l'initiative, la correspondance directe avec les autorités subalternes, ainsi que l'émission des ordres, appartiennent exclusivement au Gouverneur-Général; tandis que d'un autre côté, la discussion, la délibération et la décision sur les objets judiciaires, entrent dans les attributions du Conseil Administratif sus-mentionné. Par conséquent lorsqu'il ne s'agit pas de l'exécution pure et simple de quelque disposition de loi générale de l'Etat ou de quelque règlement spéciale concernant la Crète, mais de mesures qui demandent à être discutées, examinées et arrêtées, ces mesures doivent être soumises au Conseil Administratif.

Art. 14. D'après ce qui précède, le Conseil aura le droit de discuter, avant leur mise en exécution, toutes les mesures administratives qui peuvent avoir ou non une durée déterminée. Aucune mesure administrative, telle que organisation de municipalités, d'établissements de bienfaisance, constructions, ou suppression de marchés ou de cimetières, achat, vente, échange ou cession provisoire des terrains ou propriétés publiques, le soin de faire revenir les habitants qui se sont expatriés, les récompenses promises pour cet effet, &c., aucune de ces mesures ne doit être exécutée dans l'île directement ou indirectement par les Gouverneurs ou sous-Gouverneurs avant d'avoir été préalablement discutée et arrêtée par la majorité du Conseil Administratif. Ce Conseil peut modifier, s'il le juge nécessaire, les mesures proposées par le Gouverneur à ce sujet. Les ordres ainsi discutés ou modifiés seront mis sans retard en exécution par le Gouverneur-Général, à moins que leur sanction par le Gouvernement Impérial ne soit indispensable. Dans le cas où le Gouverneur-Général croirait devoir ordonner l'exécution de quelque'un des ordres ci-dessus mentionnés, sans accepter les modifications qui y auront été apportées par le Conseil Administratif, ou malgré que l'ordre a été rejeté par ce Conseil, le Gouverneur-Général ne pourra alors procéder à l'exécution de cet ordre qu'en y étant autorisé par une Ordonnance Impériale.

Le Gouverneur-Général peut former au sein du Conseil Administratif des Commissions chargées d'examiner les objets susindiqués, et d'en faire un Rapport qui doit être soumis à ce Conseil.

Art. 15. Sans modification.

Art. 16. Idem.

Art. 17. Le Conseil Administratif du vilayet repartira par Gouvernements tous les impôts directs dont la perception aura été ordonnée par quelque loi ou décision légale de l'Assemblée Générale de l'île; il réglera aussi le mode de perception des impôts directs fixé par cette même Assemblée, et approuvée conformément à l'Article 13 du Firman Impérial qui accompagne le Statut Organique.

Art. 18. Sans modification.

Art. 19. Idem.

Art. 20. Le Conseil dont il s'agit doit présenter et justifier devant l'Assemblée Générale le Budget de l'année passée et prochaine, en général pour toutes les dépenses, recettes, et frais extraordinaires de l'île; le Budget sera rédigé en Grec et en Turc.

Art. 21. Sans changement.

Art. 22. Idem.

Art. 23. Le Conseil Administratif est spécialement chargé de recueillir tous les éléments propres à constituer un travail statistique exact et régulier pour toute l'île, qui sera publié chaque année par le journal du vilayet.

Art. 24. Ce Conseil susmentionné a le droit de faire des observations au Gouverneur-Général toutes les fois que ce dernier s'écarterait de ses devoirs ci-dessus indiqués envers le Conseil.

Art. 25. Sans changement.

Art. 26. Idem.

Art. 27. Idem.

Art. 28. Aucune séance ni décision de ce Conseil ne pourra être considérée comme légale si la moitié plus un au moins de ses membres ne prendraient part aux délibérations.

Art. 29. Les Membres du Conseil Administratif sont élus par l'Assemblée Géné-

rale; les Musulmans doivent choisir les Conseillers Musulmans, et les Chrétiens les leur parmi les habitants les plus capables de l'île. La durée de leur service est de deux ans.

Art. 30. Sans modification.

Art. 31. La moitié des Membres du Conseil seront remplacés chaque année.

Art. 32. Sans changement.

Art. 33. Les Membres du Conseil Administratif du vilayet recevront chacun 1,250 piastres per mois.

Article dernier.

Les Caïmacams, leurs aides, les Présidents de Tribunaux, les Premiers Secrétaires du Gouvernement Général et des sous-Gouvernements, les Procureurs et sous-Procureurs, ainsi que les Juges d'Instruction, doivent être nommés par les autorités compétentes, par Ordonnance Impériale, et sur la proposition du Gouverneur-Général et de la majorité du Conseil Administratif. Les employés subalternes seront nommés par le Gouverneur-Général et le Conseil Administratif, sur la proposition du Gouverneur et du Conseil Administratif de leur districts. Les Caïmacams et leurs mouavins doivent être pris parmi les habitants les plus honorables et les plus capables de l'île, et parmi ceux qui se distinguent par l'intégrité de leur caractère; ils doivent surtout avoir de l'instruction.

Chapitre III.—*Elections et Attributions des Conseils Administratifs de Gouvernements et sous-Gouvernements.*

Art. 34. Dans les districts dont la population est mixte les Conseils Administratifs sont formés par le Gouverneur ou Président et par six membres élus par les habitants Chrétiens et Musulmans de tout le district de la manière suivante :—

Dans les districts dont la population est mixte d'une manière égale, il y aura trois membres de chaque religion; et là où les habitants de l'une des deux religions sont supérieures en nombre, ceux-ci éliront quatre membres et les autres qui seront en minorité seulement deux. Dans les districts habités exclusivement par des Chrétiens ou par des Musulmans tous les six membres doivent être Chrétiens ou Musulmans.

Art. 35. Les Conseils de Cantons présidés par le Caïmacam se composent de lui et de six membres Chrétiens ou Musulmans habitant le canton. Leur élection se fera sur la base qui a été fixée pour l'élection des membres des Conseils de Gouvernements.

Art. 36. Les Gouverneurs et les sous-Gouverneurs bien qu'ayant une juridiction déterminée et qu'ils représentent le Gouverneur-Général, néanmoins toutes les fois qu'il s'agira de mesures qui échappent à leur compétence, ils sont tenu de soumettre ces mesures à l'examen et à la décision du Conseil Administratif du Gouvernement ou du sous-Gouvernement, qui décide par majorité.

Art. 37. Les Conseils des Gouvernements et des sous-Gouvernements ne doivent sous aucun prétexte s'immiscer dans les affaires judiciaires.

Art. 38. Au contraire si la mesure que veut appliquer le Gouverneur ou le sous-Gouverneur est de celles qui exigent un examen et une discussion préalables, les Gouverneurs en décideront d'un commun accord avec la majorité du Conseil la mesure, fût elle-même adoptée par le Gouverneur-Général et son Conseil, conformément aux Arts. 13-21. Et de même que les Caïmacams dépendent hiérarchiquement des Gouverneurs, de même les Conseils des Cantons dépendent des Conseils de Districts. Par conséquent lorsqu'il s'agit de mesures qui n'appartiennent pas exclusivement au pouvoir exécutif, les Gouverneurs et Caïmacams sont tenus de les soumettre à la délibération de leur Conseil.

Art. 39. Sans modification.

Art. 40. Idem.

Art. 41. Idem.

Chapitre IV.—*Elections et Attributions des Conseils de Gouvernements et de sous-Gouvernements.*

Art. 42. Les membres des Conseils de Gouvernements et ceux du Tribunal Mixte du District sont élus par les habitants des cantons et des villes par l'entremise de quatre délégués choisi par les habitants de chaque canton ou ville, qui se réunissent à cet effet dans le chef-lieu du canton ou dans la ville le premier Dimanche du mois d'Avril. Tous ces délégués réunis le troisième Dimanche du mois d'Avril dans le chef-

lieu du Gouvernement, procèdent à l'élection des membres du Conseil Administratif et du Tribunal Mixte par pluralité de voix, après toutefois que chaque ville ou canton aura désigné quelques candidats parmi ceux dont les noms sont inscrits sur les catalogues des villes et des cantons. L'élection doit se faire de manière à satisfaire chaque ville et chaque canton. Les électeurs Chrétiens choisissent les membres Chrétiens et les Musulmans les leurs. L'élection des membres des Conseils de cantons, tant Musulmans que Chrétiens, doit être faite par les Démogérontes convoqués au chef-lieu du canton le second Dimanche du mois d'Avril.

Art. 43. La durée des fonctions des membres du Conseil de Gouvernements et de sous-Gouvernements est de deux ans; ils sont remplacés par moitié et à tour de rôle chaque année et reçoivent, ceux des Conseils de districts un traitement de 750 piastres par mois, et ceux des Conseils de cantons 200 piastres.

Composition, Attributions, et devoirs des Démogéronties de Villages.

N.B.—L'Article 66 du Chapitre XI du Règlement sur les Tribunaux Mixtes, est transféré au Chapitre IV du Règlement sur les Conseils Administratifs Mixtes.

Art. 44. Chaque village doit être directement administré par une Démogérontie. Les limites de chaque village seront fixées par la Loi Communale qui sera élaborée.

N.B.—L'Article 68 du Chapitre XII du Règlement sur les Tribunaux Mixtes, est transféré au Chapitre IV du Règlement sur les Conseils Administratifs Mixtes.

Art. 45. Pour ce qui concerne la partie judiciaire, les Démogéronties de villages constituent une autorité arbitrale dont les décisions ne sont valables qu'autant que les parties en litige auront consenti par écrit à se soumettre à l'arbitrage de la Démogérontie. Dans tous les cas les décisions émanées de ces Démogéronties de villages ne sont exécutoires qu'après avoir été légalisées par le Tribunal Mixte du canton dont fait partie le village.

Art. 46. Une loi spéciale devra fixer les limites des Communes.

L'Assemblée Générale doit soumettre au Gouvernement Impérial un Projet de Loi Communale, mais jusqu'à la promulgation de cette loi, les villages seront administrés comme par le passé par les Démogéronties.

Supplément.

Comme la grande majorité des habitants Chrétiens et Musulmans ne sachant pas la langue Turque, parle en général le Grec, cette dernière langue sera introduite également comme le Turc dans tous les bureaux publics, tribunaux, et conseils. Par conséquent le nombre d'écrivains Chrétiens dans ces bureaux sera égal à celui des Musulmans, afin que tous les documents, sans exception, tels que sentences, procès-verbaux, enquêtes, et tout autre travail d'écriture soient aussi rédigés en Grec.

Pour cette même raison tous les ordres administratifs ou judiciaires seront également rédigés en Grec.

La direction de ce travail est confiée, dans chaque district, à un Secrétaire-Général Chrétien possédant cette langue. Vu le besoin toujours croissant de donner plus de développement à l'instruction publique, le Gouvernement Impérial, outre la subvention de 3,000 piastres par mois qu'il a alloué aux écoles de la Canée, Rethymo, Candia, Sphakia, et Lassithi, prêtera aussi tout son appui moral à l'extension des lumières en exhortant et en stimulant le zèle des habitants par l'entremise des Gouverneurs, et surtout des Caïmacams. Ils s'ensuit que l'instruction doit être obligatoire pour les enfants au-dessus de cinq ans et pour ceux qui n'auront pas encore dépassé leur quatorzième année, sous peine d'amende imposée aux parents ou tuteurs de ces enfants par les Conseils des Cantons.

Tous les procès civiques ayant trait à des terres en friche, à des prairies, ou à des droits de voisinage (pavalés) seront jugés par les Conseils Mixtes sans que le Mehkémé ait jamais à y intervenir.

Conformément au dernier Firman Impérial relatif aux réformes, il sera institué dans l'île un nombre suffisant d'offices de notaires qui seront chargés de dresser tous les titres de propriétés, transferts, actes d'hypothèques, et en général tout autre document notaire, sans aucune espèce d'emmixtion de la part du Mehkémé ou de l'Ercaf.

Le corps de gendarmerie sera composé, en proportion de la population, de simples soldats et d'officiers Chrétiens et Musulmans indigènes jusqu'au grade de Colonel (Miralai).

Nul n'est frappé d'exil et ne subit un emprisonnement préventif sans une décision judiciaire.

Les blasphèmes ou offenses contre la religion d'une des races habitant dans l'île,

cas qui étaient jusqu'ici punis de bannissement, seront désormais jugés par les tribunaux réguliers et punis d'après le Code Pénal; la peine du bannissement sera par conséquent abolie.

Tous les enfants trouvés, à quelque religion qu'ils appartiennent, sont entretenus jusqu'à leur sevrage aux frais du Gouvernement.

La Caisse Publique doit aussi pourvoir aux frais d'enterrement des pauvres qui meurent dans l'île, comme cela se pratique pour les Musulmans.

Le Gouvernement ne doit rien négliger pour le développement du commerce, de l'industrie et de l'agriculture. Il poursuivra par conséquent activement la construction des routes centrales, de ponts et la réparation des principaux ports de l'île. Dans ce but il sera affecté annuellement des revenus de l'île une somme suffisante pour les travaux publics conformément au Firman Impérial qui accompagne le Statut Organique.

Le commerce sera aussi l'objet de toute la sollicitude du Gouvernement, qui aura soin de bien organiser les Tribunaux de Commerce dans les villes pour la prompt expédition et l'équitable solution des affaires commerciales.

On fera également tous les efforts possibles pour développer l'agriculture, en instituant surtout une police rurale afin de prévenir les dommages et les dégâts qui sont occasionnés aux agriculteurs.

Le Gouvernement accordera des privilèges suffisants aux fondateurs d'établissements industriels ou de banques agricoles et commerciales dans l'île.

Les décisions émanées des autorités ecclésiastiques du pays dans les limites de leur compétence, et sur des affaires purement spirituelles ou ecclésiastiques, seront exécutées par les autorités civiles sans aucune espèce d'intervention, conformément d'ailleurs aux dispositions du Hatti-Houmaïun et des bérats dont sont munis le Patriarche et les Archevêques. On prêterait en outre aux autorités ecclésiastiques toute assistance possible dans les limites des rapports qui doivent exister entre les autorités civiles et religieuses et qui sont consacrés par les lois.

Attendu que le Dieu adoré dans les mosquées est le même Dieu tout-puissant qui est aussi adoré dans les églises des Chrétiens, ces derniers peuvent en toute liberté ériger, réparer et restaurer leurs temples notamment les chapelles en ruines qui sont disséminées dans les champs. Et pour prévenir des inconvénients la délimitation de ces temples et l'étendue de leurs enceintes seront fixées par le Conseil Administratif du Vilayet.

Une pleine et entière liberté de conscience est laissée à tous les habitants de l'île d'après la teneur du Hatti-Houmaïun; par conséquent l'expatriation forcée qui était infligée aux renégats, est désormais abolie.

L'âge de majorité pour les mineurs est fixé à vingt-un ans, et ce n'est qu'à cet âge qu'un jeune homme ou une jeune fille peuvent être admis à faire la déclaration de leur apostasie, après avoir toutefois passé quelques jours chez le chef spirituel de la religion à laquelle appartenait le renégat avant son abjuration.

Attendu que le privilège de se gouverner eux-mêmes accordé aux habitants de l'île leur donne assurément le droit d'avoir une Administration Nationale, on aura soin d'appeler aussi aux importantes fonctions administratives, telles que celles de secrétaires généraux et de collecteurs, les indigènes Chrétiens et Musulmans dont la capacité, l'honorabilité et l'instruction ne laisseraient rien à désirer.

Tous les réfugiés Crétois se trouvant en Grèce ou ailleurs, et qui ont été expatriés sans un jugement préalable des tribunaux du pays, retourneront tous sans exception dans leurs foyers. Leurs propriétés leur seront restituées quand même il y en aurait parmi eux qui auront changé de religion.

L'institution d'imprimeries et de syllogues ainsi que la publication de journaux particuliers sont autorisées dans l'île, conformément aux lois en vigueur de l'Empire.

Toute Ordonnance ou Ordre Véziriel qui contreviendrait les présentes lois organiques ne saurait être désormais exécuté dans l'île de Crète.

Pour assurer la fidèle et rigoureuse exécution des présentes lois il sera procédé à un recensement général de tous les habitants de l'île d'après la loi communale qui sera élaborée par l'Assemblée Générale.

Adresse des Membres Chrétiens de l'Assemblée Générale de la Crète à son Altesse le Grand Vézir.

Altesse,

Canée, le $\frac{1}{2}$ ^e₈ Mai, 1876.

Il est incontestable que ni l'agriculture, ni l'industrie, ni l'instruction publique, ni aucune œuvre d'utilité publique, ne saurait se développer et faire des progrès dans

un pays privé d'institutions qui règlent les relations entre gouvernants et administrés et qui répondent aux besoins de ces œuvres d'utilité générale; dans un pays dépourvu d'Administration composée de personnes honnêtes, intelligentes, éclairées et spéciales dans chaque branche du service; en un mot, d'une Administration comprenant sa mission, remplissant fidèlement son devoir et exécutant avec impartialité et franchise les lois établies et les ordres et instructions qui lui sont transmis.

Sans ces conditions essentielles, nulle amélioration, nul progrès n'est jamais possible. Toute action est paralysée par la marche irrégulière, sciemment ou involontairement adoptée par les gouvernants; la confiance si utile et indispensable des administrés envers le pouvoir est anéantie, la confusion et le désordre règnent partout, et ce triste état de choses ne tarde pas à avoir pour conséquence naturelle et inévitable une malaise et un relâchement général qui entraînent les maux et les calamités incalculables de la réaction.

Il n'est donc pas surprenant que la population de cette île ait vu avec regret le soin que les Gouverneurs-Généraux ont toujours mis à ne pas laisser les représentants du peuple sortir des limites étroites qu'on leur avait assignées et qui, d'après ces fonctionnaires, se résumeraient dans les mots commerce, agriculture, industrie et instruction publique; comme si le succès de ces œuvres pouvait dépendre de la seule évocation de ces mots ou de la seule expression d'un vœu, comme si toutes ces promesses pouvaient être réalisées sans bonne volonté, sans les organes et les moyens nécessaires, et que le progrès ou la prospérité d'un pays pût être obtenu sans une bonne administration et de bonnes institutions!

Mais l'expérience n'est-elle pas là pour nous dire que ce système de restriction imposé aux délégués du peuple pendant les sessions précédentes de l'Assemblée Générale, n'a jamais contribué à améliorer le mauvais état du pays et qu'on s'est épuisé en vains efforts pour trouver un remède aux phénomènes symptomatiques du mal sans avoir jamais songé à le combattre dans sa racine ou à en chercher la cause primordiale: que de fois les Députés n'ont-ils pas fixé l'attention des autorités sur l'état défectueux et précaire de plusieurs œuvres d'utilité publique. Que de fois n'ont-ils pas indiqué les moyens d'y remédier et n'y ont-ils pas invoqué la sollicitude et l'équité du Gouvernement! Que de fois n'ont-ils pas demandé l'exacte et sincère application des lois en vigueur!

Si on se donnait la peine de jeter un coup d'œil sur les demandes soumis par les représentants des différents cantons, si l'on examinait les procès-verbaux des discussions qui ont eu lieu pendant les sessions précédentes, on aurait acquis la conviction que le pays n'a jamais manqué de signaler tout ce qui avait besoin d'être redressé.

En attendant, le système suivi dans l'île par quelques individus qui faisaient si peu de cas des remontrances du peuple et méconnaissaient si étrangement les intentions bienveillantes et les ordres du Gouvernement de notre auguste Souverain, a été un système stérile en résultats, rétrograde, oppressif, et qui a beaucoup contribué à augmenter le malaise du pays, malgré les bonnes dispositions de notre Gouverneur-Général actuel.

Dans son désir de réparer les désastres et les dégâts occasionnés dans l'île par les derniers événements et de satisfaire aux vœux légitimes de cette population, Sa Majesté le Sultan avait doté la Crète d'un Statut Organique Spécial qui était alors considéré par le monde civilisé comme une garantie réelle d'un meilleur avenir pour ce pays. De son côté, dans le rapport qu'il présenta le 1 Mai, 1868, à Sa Majesté le Sultan, le Grand Vézir Aali Pacha, en analysant les dispositions de cette charte, déclarait à son Souverain et au monde entier que le système politique et administratif inauguré en Crète était celui du self-Gouvernement, dans l'acception la plus démocratique du mot. En entendant cette assurance de la bouche même du Chef du Cabinet Ottoman, on était en droit de croire que la fidèle exécution du Statut Organique imposée par l'esprit de justice qui, dans ces circonstances exceptionnelles, avait dicté ses différentes dispositions, aurait en effet justifié l'attente de l'éminent homme d'Etat. Un peu plus loin et dans le même rapport à Sa Majesté le Sultan, son Altesse ajoutait que si la population Crétoise se montrait digne des nouveaux droits qui lui étaient prodigués, Sa Majesté trouverait la récompense de tant de bienfaits dans le dévouement et la reconnaissance de ce peuple.

Les Crétois n'ont pas démenti cette conviction d'Aali Pacha par leur conduite pleine de dévouement pour Sa Majesté Impériale. Mais fort de leur droit octroyé par ce même Souverain, il leur est pourtant impossible de ne pas déclarer hautement qu'ils sont loin de jouir des avantages de l'égalité en justice et des privilèges qui leur furent sanctionnés par des Firmans successifs et confirmés par le Grand Vézir de Sa Majesté Impériale.

Une longue expérience a prouvé à cette population que le Statut Organique ne répond ni à l'esprit ni à la lettre des Ordonnances Impériales relative à l'égalité, qu'il ne satisfait point aux besoins des Chrétiens, et ne s'accorde pas avec les progrès réalisés par le pays.

Persuadé que si sa voix pouvait parvenir jusqu'au Trône Impérial, elle serait écoutée avec bienveillance et appellerait la haute sollicitude de Sa Majesté, le peuple Crétois n'a pas hésité à déclarer, par l'intermédiaire de ses représentants et en pleine séance de l'Assemblée Générale, que cette institution a besoin d'être modifiée sur des bases plus larges qui répondent aux magnanimes intentions de notre Souverain, aux besoins du pays, et aux exigences de l'époque. Le peuple pense qu'il faut à la Crète une administration paternelle, impartiale, honnête, tolérante, juste, éclairée, et active ; qu'elle soit fondée sur les principes d'une égalité parfaite et sur les droits imprescriptibles de la majorité des deux races habitant l'île ; en un mot, une administration librement choisie par le peuple sur la base du self-gouvernement qui a été solennellement reconnu et proclamé. Sur la base sus-indiquée et l'autorisation qui nous en a été accordée nous nous sommes d'autant plus empressés de soumettre à votre Altesse, par l'entremise de son Excellence Réouf Pacha, les modifications que nous a semblé comporter le Statut Organique, qu'en agissant ainsi, nous sommes persuadés d'aller au devant des intentions paternelles de notre auguste Souverain et de faire participer tout le peuple sans exception aux inappréciables avantages d'une égalité réelle. En ne nous écartant point de ce principe salubre, nous avons posé les bases d'un édifice solide et durable qui assurera, nous en sommes persuadés, le bien-être et la prospérité de notre patrie.

En terminant nous prions le très-haut pour la longévité et la gloire de notre auguste Souverain Abdul Aziz, et nous renouvelons à votre Altesse l'assurance du dévouement du peuple Chrétien de la Crète envers Sa Majesté Impériale.

Nous avons, &c,

(Suivent les signatures des 42 Députés Chrétiens.)

Règlement sur les Tribunaux Mixtes.

Chapitre I.—Composition des Tribunaux Mixtes dans les Cantons.

Article 1. Chaque Canton aura un tribunal mixte.

Art. 2. Ces tribunaux seront composés d'un président et de quatre juges.

Art. 3. Les présidents des sus-dits tribunaux sont nommés, destitués et rétribués directement par le Gouvernement Impérial par Ordonnance Impériale conformément à l'Article dernier, Chapitre II, des présentes Lois Organiques sur l'élection et la juridiction du Conseil Administratif du Vilayet.

Art. 4. Les membres de ces tribunaux sont choisis parmi les personnes dont les noms figurent sur les listes dressées par les Caïmacams et les Gouverneurs.

Art 5. Le Caïmacam ou le Gouverneur dressera à cet effet une liste nominative de tous les habitants de son canton qui, ayant accompli leur vingt-cinquième année, ne sont pas compris dans les cas ci-après indiqués qui entraînent la récusation.

Art. 6. Sont récusables et ne peuvent être inscrits sur la liste dont il s'agit :

1°. Tous ceux qui ne savent ni lire ni écrire.

2°. Les domestiques.

3°. Ceux qui ont été entièrement ou en partie privés de leurs droits civiques conformément à la loi pénale et par décision judiciaire.

4°. Tous ceux qui ayant fait faillite n'ont pas été réhabilités par décision judiciaire.

5°. Tous ceux qui ne jouissent pas de toutes leurs facultés intellectuelles ou qui sont en tutelle.

6°. Ceux qui sont accusés de quelque crime ou délit et les contumaces.

7°. Ceux qui ont été condamnés pour crime, vol, gain illicite, abus de confiance, corruption de mœurs, ou pour tout autre délit et qui ont subi un emprisonnement de plus d'une année.

Art. 7. Ne peuvent être également portés sur la liste sus-indiquée les employés civils au militaires payés par le Gouvernement.

Art. 8. Cette liste doit être publiée et affichée le 1^{er} Mai de chaque année ; elle doit être écrite en Grec et en Turc. (La suite de cet Article reste sans changement.)

Art. 9. Seront effacés chaque année de la liste les noms des individus morts l'année dernière. (Le reste sans modification.)

Art. 10. Le 1^{er} Avril le sous-Gouverneur invitera les habitants Chrétiens et Musulmans de chaque canton à procéder à l'élection des quatre membres du Tribunal Mixte. L'élection se fera toujours sur la base de la majorité de la population Chrétienne et Musulmane de chaque canton et parmi les personnes inscrites sur les catalogues. Mais dans les cantons habités exclusivement par des Chrétiens ou par des Musulmans, les juges susmentionnés doivent être tous Chrétiens ou Musulmans. Le procès-verbal de l'élection sera cacheté par le Caïmacam et copie légalisée devra en être transmise au Président au Tribunal Mixte pour être déposée dans ses archives.

Art. 11. Les membres de ces tribunaux de cantons recevront un traitement mensuel de piastres 450. La durée de leur service sera d'un an.

Au commencement de chaque année, le Président du Tribunal Mixte du canton aura soin de publier un programme où seront indiqués les jours et heures de travail du Tribunal pour toute l'année. Ce programme doit être légalisé par le Tribunal devant lequel sont appelées les décisions du Tribunal Cantonal.

Art. 12. Sans changement.

Chapitre II.—*Composition des Tribunaux Mixtes de Gouvernements.*

Art. 13. Sans modification.

Art. 14. Idem.

Art. 15. Les Présidents de ces Tribunaux sont nommés, destitués et rétribués directement par le Gouvernement Impérial, d'après l'Article dernier du Chapitre II relatif à l'élection et à la juridiction du Conseil du Vilayet.

Art. 16. Les membres des susdits Tribunaux sont élus d'après les prescriptions de l'Article 14 du Chapitre III du présent Statut Organique sur l'élection et la juridiction des Conseils Administratifs des Gouvernements et des sous-Gouvernements.

Art. 17. Cet Article a été supprimé.

Art. 18. Les quatre juges ainsi choisis par les électeurs Chrétiens et Musulmans devront servir pendant deux ans, après lesquels on procède à d'autres élections. Dans le cas où quelqu'un parmi eux viendrait à mourir ou à donner sa démission, on en choisira un autre de la manière ci-dessus indiquée.

Art. 19. Sans changement.

Art. 20. Les membres des Tribunaux Mixtes des Gouvernements ("Moutessarifliks") recevront chacun un traitement de 9,600 piastres par an.

Au commencement de chaque année le Président du Tribunal Mixte fixera dans un programme les heures et jours de travail du Tribunal pour toute l'année. Ce programme devra être légalisé par le Président du Tribunal d'Appel du Vilayet.

Art. 21. Sans changement.

Chapitre III.—*Organisation du Tribunal Mixte d'Appel siégeant dans le Chef-lieu du Vilayet.*

Art. 22. Dans le chef-lieu du vilayet il y aura un Tribunal Mixte d'Appel.

Art. 23. Sans modification.

Art. 24. Le Président de ce Tribunal Supérieur est choisi, destitué et rétribué directement par le Gouvernement Impérial et de la manière indiquée dans l'Article dernier, Chapitre II, relatif à l'élection et à la juridiction du Conseil Administratif du Vilayet.

Art. 25. Les membres de ce Tribunal d'Appel seront élus par l'Assemblée Générale; il y en aura deux de chaque religion. Les Députés Chrétiens éliront séparément les deux juges Chrétiens et les Députés Musulmans leur deux juges coreligionnaires, conformément à l'Article 25 du Chapitre II relatif à la session annuelle de l'Assemblée Générale. La durée des fonctions de ces magistrats sera de trois ans.

Art. 26. Cet Article a été supprimé.

Art. 27. Sans changement.

Art. 28. Chacun des juges ci-dessus mentionnés recevra 1,500 piastres par mois.

Art. 29. Sans changement.

Art. 30. Idem.

Chapitre IV.—*Juridiction Générale et Spéciale des Tribunaux Mixtes de différentes degrés siégeant dans le Chef-lieu du Vilayet.*

Art. 31. Sans modification.

Juridiction Générale.

- Art. 32. Sans changement.
- Art. 33. Idem.
- Art. 34. Idem.
- Art. 35. Idem.

Chapitre V.—*Juridiction des Tribunaux Mixtes de Gouvernements.*

- Art. 36. Les Tribunaux Mixtes de Gouvernements jugent en premier ressort—
- (1.) Les procès de leur juridiction conformément à l'Article 32 du Chapitre IV du Statut Organique, relatif à la juridiction générale des Tribunaux Mixtes du Gouvernement.
- (2.) Sans changement.
- Art. 37. Sans changement.
- Art. 38. Idem.

Chapitre VI.—*Juridiction Spéciale des Tribunaux Mixtes de divers degrés.*

- Art. 39. Sans modification, il y est seulement ajouté : “ Les affaires de succession, tant que le partage n'aura pas été fait, sont portées par les créanciers devant les Démogéronties Centrales du lieu où était domicilié le défunt, lors même que ce dernier serait en état de faillite.” Le reste de l'Article n'a pas subi de changement.
- Art. 40. Sans modification.

Chapitre VII.—*Prescriptions applicables aux Tribunaux de tout degré.*

- Art. 41. Sans modification.
- Art. 42. Idem.
- Art. 43. Idem.
- Art. 44. Idem.
- Art. 45. Tous les jugements rendus par les Tribunaux Mixtes devront être exécutés par des huissiers expérimentés appartenant aux deux religions, après que les présidents auront revêtu les décisions du Décret suivant : “ Il est enjoint à tout huissier d'exécuter la présente et aux autorités civiles et militaires d'y prêter leur assistance en cas de besoin.” De leur côté, le Gouverneur-Général, les Gouverneurs et les sous-Gouverneurs, ordonneront l'exécution de ces jugements par l'injonction : “ Qu'il soit exécuté.” Toute instance légale contre le jugement sera examinée par le Tribunal qui aura rendu la décision.
- Art. 46. Le Conseil Administratif du Vilayet fixera les droits judiciaires qui devront être perçus sur tous les procès jugés par les Tribunaux Mixtes.
- Art. 47. Sans modification.
- Art. 48. Idem.
- Art. 49. Idem.
- Art. 50. Idem.

Articles derniers.

L'élection et la nomination des Présidents des Tribunaux Mixtes dans les cantons devront se faire sur la base de toute la population de l'île. Les Caïmacams ainsi que les Présidents pourront être déplacés sur la proposition des Conseils Administratifs approuvée par la majorité du Conseil Administratif du Vilayet, conformément à l'Article dernier du Chapitre II relatif à l'élection et à la juridiction du Conseil Administratif du Vilayet. Dans les cantons dont la population est exclusivement Chrétienne ou Musulmane, les Présidents seront tous Chrétiens ou Musulmans. Mais dans les chefs-lieux des Gouvernements, c'est-à-dire là où les Gouverneurs sont Musulmans, tous les Présidents des Tribunaux seront Chrétiens, et là où les Gouverneurs sont Chrétiens les Présidents devront être Musulmans.

Aucun Naïb ne pourra être nommé Président d'un des principaux Tribunaux de l'île.

Il y aura des Procureurs, des sous-Procureurs, et des Juges d'Instruction auprès de chaque Tribunal de l'île. Le Tribunal d'Appel aura un Procureur et un sous-Procureur. Auprès de chaque Tribunal Mixte il y aura un Procureur et un Juge d'Instruction, conformément à l'Article dernier du Chapitre II, relatif à l'élection et à la juridiction du Conseil Administratif du Vilayet.

Chapitre VIII.—*Tribunaux de Commerce.*

Art. 51. Sans changement.

Art. 52. Idem.

Art. 53. Idem.

Art. 54. Les Présidents des Tribunaux sus-mentionnés sont nommés, destitués et rétribués directement par le Gouvernement Impérial, d'après les prescriptions de l'Article dernier du Chapitre II, relatif à l'élection et à la juridiction du Conseil Administratif du Vilayet.

Art. 55. Sans changement.

Art. 56. Idem.

Art. 57. Idem.

Art. 58. Idem.

Art. 59. La durée du service des membres des Tribunaux de Commerce sera de deux ans ; mais ils peuvent être réélus pour une autre période. En cas de décès ou de démission, les électeurs Chrétiens et Musulmans pourvoiront au remplacement du Juge décédé ou démissionnaire.

Art. 60. Sans changement.

Art. 61. Idem.

Art. 62. Les Juges du Tribunal de Commerce recevront chacun 4,800 piastres par an.

Chapitre IX.—*Compétence des Tribunaux de Commerce.*

Art. 63. Sans changement.

Art. 64. Les jugements rendus par les Tribunaux de Commerce seront exécutés conformément à l'Article 45 du Chapitre VIII.

Art. 65. Sans modification.

Article dernier.

La clause des agriculteurs est comprise dans les prescriptions de l'Article 39 du Chapitre X, relatif à la juridiction spéciale des Tribunaux Mixtes de différents degrés.

Article Additionnel.

Les membres du Tribunal d'Appel, les Procureurs, sous-Procureurs, et les Juges d'Instruction, doivent être des personnes instruites, capables, expérimentées et honorables ; ils doivent aussi parler la langue Grecque. Les Présidents doivent avoir de l'instruction, de l'expérience et de l'intégrité.

Action contre des Juges ou des employés judiciaires en général.

Lorsqu'un Juge ou un employé judiciaire aura causé, dans l'exercice de ces fonctions, quelque préjudice aux intérêts d'une des parties en litige, soit par négligence ou de propos délibéré, soit par déni de justice, etc., si l'inculpé est Président d'un Tribunal Mixte ou Juge, il sera cité devant le Tribunal d'Appel à la Canée, et s'il est Président ou membre du Tribunal d'Appel, il sera justiciable de la Cour de Cassation siégeant à Constantinople, où il sera condamné à indemniser la partie lésée. Le demandeur pourra se réserver le droit de poursuivre ultérieurement l'accusé devant les Tribunaux réguliers, conformément à l'Article 103 et les suivants du Chapitre VI du Code Pénal. On en agira de même à l'égard de tout employé civil.

Mon Prince,

St. Petersburg, November 14, 1876.

WITH reference to the Memorandum which I had the honour to place in the hands of your Highness at Orianda on the 5th instant, stating the terms on which I was instructed by telegraph to propose to the Imperial Government that a Conference should be held at Constantinople, I think it advisable to record those terms in an official note, as also the points which Her Majesty's Government submitted as the bases for the deliberations of the Conference.

Her Majesty's Government believe, from the communication which they have received from the Powers, that there is a general feeling that the only solution of the questions arising out of recent events in Turkey, is to be found in a Conference, but that there is some hesitation felt in formally proposing it.

Under these circumstances, and with a view of bringing about a satisfactory settlement of those questions, Her Majesty's Government have determined to renew the suggestion made by them on the 5th ultimo, and to take the initiative in proposing that a Conference should be held forthwith at Constantinople, in which all the Guaranteeing Powers and the Porte should take part, and each Government should be at liberty to appoint two Plenipotentiaries to represent it.

Her Majesty's Government further submit, as the bases for the deliberations of the Conference:—

1. The independence and the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire.
2. A declaration that the Powers do not intend to seek for, and will not seek for, any territorial advantages, any exclusive influence, or any concession with regard to the commerce of their subjects which those of every other nation may not equally obtain.

This declaration was made on the 17th September, 1840, in the Protocol for the Pacification of the Levant; and again, August 3rd, 1860, in regard to the Pacification of Syria.

3. The bases of pacification proposed to the Porte on the 21st of September, viz.:—

(a.) The *status quo*, speaking roughly, both as regards Servia and Montenegro.

(b.) That the Porte should simultaneously undertake, in a Protocol to be signed at Constantinople with the Representatives of the Mediating Powers, to grant to Bosnia and Herzegovina a system of local or administrative autonomy, by which is to be understood a system of local institutions which shall give the population some control over their own local affairs, and guarantees against the exercise of arbitrary authority. There is to be no question of the creation of a tributary State.

Guarantees of a similar kind to be also provided against maladministration in Bulgaria.

The reforms already agreed to by the Porte, in the note addressed to the Representatives of the Powers, on the 13th of February last, to be included in the administrative arrangements for Bosnia and the Herzegovina, and so far as they may be applicable for Bulgaria.

Her Majesty's Government have also desired that in proposing to the Government of His Majesty the Emperor of Russia a Conference on these bases, I should state that if this proposal meets with general acceptance, Her Majesty's Government will lose no time in appointing a special Ambassador to proceed to Constantinople to take part in the Conference.

If the other Powers thought it advisable Her Majesty's Government would not object to their Plenipotentiaries joining in preliminary discussions with the Plenipotentiaries of the other five Guaranteeing Powers before the opening of the Conference. These discussions to be on the same bases as those proposed for the Conference.

I avail, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Doc. 381

Major-General Wellesley to Lord A. Loftus.—(Received at the Foreign Office, November 21.)

(No. 37.)

My Lord,

St. Petersburg, November 17, 1876.

I HAVE been struck lately by the warlike tone of the majority of Russian officers.

This feeling shows itself not only among the younger ranks, but just as strongly among officers, whose standing gives them weight in the country.

The prevailing idea appears to be that a war with Turkey is inevitable, and the Russians underrate the difficulties which they would incur in an invasion of Turkey, even were the latter Power to fight single-handed.

They talk openly of dictating terms of peace at Constantinople, and it would appear that the Emperor, carried away by the enthusiasm with which he has been greeted both at Moscow and here, is not doing his best to calm this military excitement.

His speech at the review of last Wednesday, the gist of which I reported to your Lordship, was calculated to increase rather than to allay the hopes of the war party, and when His Majesty wished success to the Grand Duke Nicolas and the army His Imperial Highness has been appointed to command, the hundreds of officers whom the Emperor was addressing took off their helmets and cheered with the utmost enthusiasm.

In my humble opinion, this apparent change in the Emperor's ideas is a sign of great danger for the future, for if His Majesty, notwithstanding his well-known peaceful inclinations, and notwithstanding his power, has been forced by the will of his people to set a portion of his armies on foot, it is difficult to foresee how far he will be able to restrain the troops when mobilized.

It is easy to deny all idea of annexation, and I believe that the Emperor himself is sincere in his protestations to that effect, but should the Russians be able to dictate terms of peace after a successful campaign, it would not be easy to withdraw their conquering army without showing them some material result of their victory, and more especially if the sovereign has been forced to declare war, against his will, by the religious fanaticism of his country.

I have, &c.

(Signed) FRED. WELLESLEY, *Military Attaché.*Doc. 382 *Count Schouvaloff to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 21.)*

Mon cher Comte,

Londres, le 18 Novembre, 1876.

DES dépêches télégraphiques reçues de Pétersbourg depuis notre entrevue m'engagent à réitérer ma demande de faire publier le compte rendu de Lord Loftus.

Le Prince Gortchakow le demande encore une fois comme la preuve de vos bonnes dispositions à notre égard et de votre impartialité.

J'ai prévenu le Prince que pour le cas de la publication, elle serait accompagnée de celle d'autres documents ayant rapport au séjour de votre Ambassadeur à Livadia.

Excusez-moi de vous troubler dans le court repos que vous prenez, mais je voudrais prévenir à temps une décision contraire de votre part.

Agréez, &c.

(Signé) SCHOUVALOFF.

Doc. 383

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 21, 1.17 A.M.)*

(Telegraphic.)

St. Petersburg, November 20, 1876, 5.45 P.M.

COUNT SCHOUVALOFF will receive a despatch for communication to your Lordship, in reply to that of October 30, of which following is *précis* :—

* Repeated to Embassies.

Prince Gortchakow places on record efforts of Imperial Cabinet for preservation of peace, throwing on England responsibility of arresting united action of Powers by refusing Berlin Memorandum. He hails with satisfaction your desire for mutual understanding, and promises support of Russia in Conference for attainment of a pacific solution.

Both Governments are agreed as to necessity of terminating deplorable state of affairs in Turkey, of securing efficacious amelioration of condition of Christians by serious practical measures, and of the necessity of guarantees for their execution.

Divergence exists as to means for attaining this aim. Her Majesty's Government seek to reconcile it with Treaty stipulations of 1856, which have continually paralyzed European action, and allowed Turkey to perpetuate with impunity a system ruinous to Christians and disastrous to European peace. He cites as successful instances of departure from these stipulations, Syrian intervention, United Principalities, Servia, Candia; and reminds that Russia for twenty years warned Europe of the consequences.

Facts have now irrefutably proved the evil to be incurable; if the Powers desire serious result, they must agree that the independence and integrity of Turkey should be subordinated to the guarantees demanded by humanity, Christian Europe, and interests of peace.

Porte having first violated Treaty engagements of 1856, Europe has the right and duty to dictate sole conditions on which it will maintain political *status quo* of Treaty, and to substitute its own action for Porte's incapacity. Russia cannot agree to half measures, such as have reacted on Russian internal tranquillity and prosperity. She considers question one of general interest, and earnestly seeks European concert for its pacific solution; she has no exclusive interests, and has given the most solemn assurances to this effect; and Prince suggested publication of my report of my conversation with Emperor.

He ends by expressing hope for common agreement of the two Governments to prevent bases of pacification remaining as hitherto a dead letter, and a constant peril to relations of two countries, as well as to European peace.

Doc. 384 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 21.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Most Confidential.)

Vienna, November 20, 1876.

THE version received by Count Andrassy of the eleven proposals expected from General Ignatiev varies in some respects from that in your Lordship's telegram of yesterday, but is essentially the same.

He declined expressing an opinion upon them before they have been made (? public), unless I would consider it strictly confidential, and engage that it should not be sent to Lord A. Loftus.

He then said that a snake (?) may be found in each proposal. The first could only be accomplished by an occupation of provinces.

The second proposed a system of appointing functionaries which Russia would not adopt herself, and which is not general for all functionaries in other countries.

He made no observation on the third.

With regard to the fourth he seemed to think it would be unreasonable to impose on the Porte the difficult task of removing 100,000 Circassians into Asia.

He said that he had objected to the fifth at Berlin, as the Porte should merely be asked to quarter its troops, so as to avoid collisions with the Christians.

The sixth was probably taken from the note of December, and he would not object to its principle if fairly carried.

The seventh would not only occasion inconvenience (? to) central Government, but each population in a province of mixed races would object to language of others being employed.

With respect to the eighth, he said that if Christian Governors are to be natives of the provinces qualified persons could not be found.

He does not understand how the ninth is to be carried, nor how the wishes, opinions, or requirements of the populations are to be ascertained, and who is to be responsible for them.

He considers the direct control proposed by No. 10, if it extends beyond Consuls

or Commissioners reporting to their Governments, incompatible with the independence and sovereignty of the Sultan.

He said that the object of General Ignatiew will be to arrange for the Slav being the dominant element in the mixed populations in the whole country between the Danube and the Mediterranean, and that, in his opinion, England and Austria should rather promote the interests and influence of Greeks.

Doc. 385

Consul-General Stanley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 24.)

(No. 20. Political.)

My Lord,

Odessa, November 16, 1876.

WITH reference to the mobilization of a portion of the troops, of which your Lordship will have heard by telegraph, I have the honour to report that this mobilization consists of the troops actually on service in the military district of Odessa and of the first line of reserve, comprising those soldiers who were on furlough for a definite time, but who would be called on in an emergency.

I was in error in stating in my Political despatch No. that my servant had unlimited leave. He had leave till 1879, and is among those now called out.

A general inscription of horses has been made, and they have been drawn the last two days.

Rishenef in Bessarabia is to be the headquarters of His Imperial Highness the Grand Duke Nicholas Nicholavitch, Commander-in-chief of the Army of the Military Arrondissement of Odessa.

This division is composed of six corps of about 40,000 each.

With regard to other military preparations, Mr. Vice-Consul Wagstaff reports to me that he has learnt from a reliable source that two companies of picked sappers and miners of 100 men each, with large funds at their disposal, are on the point of leaving Nicolaef—the one for the Pruth, the other for the Danube, near Sulina.

He also states that torpedoes have been laid down at the entrance of the estuary of the Bong, immediately inside Cinburn Spit, under Ochakof, to about three miles up the river, and that more are being laid down.

Some of these explode on impact, others at will from electric batteries.

Mr. Wagstaff also states that the circular ironclad "Vice-Admiral Popoff," is still undergoing repairs, and will not be ready till about the 24th instant, and that she will be sent either to Odessa or Ochakof, to add to the defence of those ports; but that, to insure her own safety, she is to be encircled by torpedoes. He adds that the majority of naval men at Nicolaef consider her a failure, and unable to bear her armament. Her new gun-carriages are to be on the Rayskazoff hydraulic principle.

The laying down of torpedoes was begun at Odessa this morning.

I do not, and shall be unable to know much more than this, nor would any information I might obtain about them be of use, unless accompanied by an accurate plan, which it would be impossible to obtain without spending much money.

I may say briefly that every preparation in the way of collecting military stores, calling in and arming the men, and fortifying the coast, is being made as for immediate impending war.

Among the soldiers now recalled to the ranks there is certainly no enthusiasm for the war they all anticipate.

There is no singing or cheering, but much weeping among them.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. E. STANLEY.

19th. The Railway Administration refuse goods, though they still bring down corn. Goods destined for Rieff which have been carried as far as Shmeriuka, 363 versts or 249 miles, have been returned here.

To-day's paper contains a notice forbidding the exportation of horses. It is feared that the same as to corn will soon be issued.

G. E. S.

Doc. 386

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, December 4.)

(Télégraphique.)

Constantinople, le 3 Décembre, 1876.

LES journaux de l'Europe ont donné la nouvelle d'un dissentiment qui serait survenu entre leurs Altesses le Grand Vézir et le Président du Conseil d'Etat au sujet des réformes. Vous pouvez démentir cette nouvelle, qui n'a aucun fondement. L'élaboration des réformes a touché à sa fin, et la plus complète entente à cet égard n'a cessé d'exister entre les membres du Cabinet Impérial.

Doc. 387

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.

(No. 731. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, December 4, 1876.

THE German Ambassador, in the course of conversation this afternoon, addressed to me some observations on the Turkish question, which, although he professed to be speaking without instructions, were of such importance as to make me think it desirable to place them on record.

Count Münster dwelt upon the improbability of a rupture being now avoided between Russia and Turkey. He pointed out the difficulty which the Russian Government would experience in withdrawing from the position they had taken up, in face of the excitement which now prevailed throughout the Empire, and after going to the expense of mobilizing a considerable portion of the Russian Army.

His Excellency went on to speak of the course to be pursued by England in the contingency of a war between Turkey and Russia, deprecated the idea of any immediate action by England in opposition to the latter Power until British interests were really threatened or endangered, and advocated with some earnestness the expediency of our occupying or taking possession of Egypt under such circumstances. He pointed out that so opportune a moment for a step of this nature might never occur again, and that if it were attempted two or three years hence it would meet with opposition from the French Government which the latter were not now in a position to offer.

Without stating explicitly that this advice originated in any way with Prince Bismarck, Count Münster gave me to understand that he was in constant communication with the German Chancellor, and was well acquainted with his views.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 388

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Paget.

(No. 565.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, December 4, 1876.

THE Italian Ambassador, in a conversation this afternoon, expressed to me the satisfaction which had been felt by his Government at the visit of Lord Salisbury to Rome. His Excellency said that he hoped, after the explanation which had been given to Lord Salisbury, that no further doubt would be entertained by Her Majesty's Government as to the pacific dispositions of Italy.

General Menabrea added that considerable uneasiness had been caused to his Government by intimations which they had received that, in the event of a Russian occupation of Bulgaria, Austria would imitate the example so set, and would, on her part, proceed to occupy Bosnia. His Excellency thought that this double occupation would have far more serious consequences than if the occupation of Bulgaria alone were in question. If, he said, a Russian force entered Bulgaria, it would do so for a definite object, and the termination of such a Russian occupation would probably not be a remote event. If, on the other hand, an Austrian force occupied Bosnia, there was no such probability that it would be withdrawn, and in that case the dismemberment of the Turkish Empire would have begun.

I said, in reply, that all the information I had received as to the intentions of the Austrian Government led me to think that they were by no means favourably disposed

towards the idea of a Russian occupation of Bulgaria. I hoped, therefore, that the report of an intended occupation of Bosnia by Austria might prove unfounded.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 389 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 4, night.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, December 4, 1876, 7 P.M.

PUBLICATION of Constitution has been delayed by disagreement in the Ministry about some Articles, but progress is being made.

General Ignatiev to-day told Minister for Foreign Affairs that the proposed publication would be an affront and defiance to the European Powers.

Europe means to propose certain measures for particular provinces, and would not take into account any proposals of the Porte referring to the general administration of the Empire, and which were brought forward only for the purpose of defeating the object of the Conference.

Minister for Foreign Affairs answered that the Constitution was being framed without reference to the Conference, and had been taken in hand before there was a question of it.

The country had suffered so much under the system followed during the late reign that it was necessary to provide securities against the repetition of the abuses.

He reminded the Ambassador that he had asked him without success what his Government proposed to demand for the insurgent provinces.

He hoped that the Constitution would be found to confer the securities expected for the populations, but he could not admit an intended Conference for bringing about a pacification to be a reason for withholding what is necessary for the proper administration of the whole Empire.

Doc. 390

The Marquis of Salisbury to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 5.)

(No. 5.)

My Lord,

Rome, November 29, 1876.

I ARRIVED at Vienna on the evening of the 24th instant, and saw Count Andrassy on the following day for several hours, and again on the morning of the 26th.

His Excellency spoke to me at considerable length on the position of the Eastern question, and examined the various plans which have been suggested for its settlement. I was gratified to find that his views were, in many respects, identical with those entertained by Her Majesty's Government. He appeared to be strongly averse to the formation by the Conference of any new tributary States, as he believed that such an arrangement would not, under existing circumstances, secure either political stability or the good government of the populations.

His Excellency was also much opposed to the idea of a Russian occupation, and expressed a hope that England would not sanction it.

I assured him that in these respects Her Majesty's Government entirely shared the opinions of the Austrian Government. At the same time, I observed that the inability of the Turks to fulfil the promises which they had made on various occasions, and the grievous sufferings which, in consequence, had befallen the Christian populations, had imposed upon Europe the duty of making every exertion to secure not only the enactment of any further reforms that might be necessary, but also guarantees for the efficacious execution of those which had already been sanctioned.

In this view Count Andrassy very cordially concurred, and, indeed, earnestly reiterated it more than once before the termination of the interviews.

I then explained to his Excellency the views entertained by Her Majesty's Government with respect to the appointment of Governors, Judges, and other executive officers in the Turkish Provinces, and the securities with which it is proposed to surround the appointment and tenure of office of those authorities.

* Repeated to Embassies.

He concurred generally in the tenor of those opinions, without pledging himself to details. At the same time he strongly urged the necessity of fiscal reforms, and especially dwelt upon the misery caused to the peasantry by the illegal maintenance of the tax-farming system. I assured his Excellency that Her Majesty's Government were keenly alive to the evils caused by this system, and would offer their most cordial assistance in procuring its effectual abolition.

The question of disarming the Mussulmans was discussed, but I agreed with his Excellency that it would be difficult to discover any practical and permanent machinery for carrying into effect what was in itself a salutary measure.

Count Andrassy readily promised that Austria would co-operate with Her Majesty's Government in their endeavours to maintain peace, but it was evident that he looked upon the present state of affairs with no little anxiety.

I have, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

Doc. 391 *Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received December 11.)

(No. 852. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Vienna, December 2, 1876.

I WAS surprised at finding from Lord Augustus Loftus' despatch No. 519, Confidential, of the 4th ultimo, that Prince Gortchakow appears to have stated to him that the Russian Government, in proposing to that of Austria-Hungary the occupation of the northern Provinces of Turkey by their respective troops, had intended that Bosnia alone should be occupied by Austria, and that the Herzegovina should remain a neutral zone between the two armies, in order to prevent the possibility of any collision between them.

In a conversation which I had the honour of holding with the Emperor, subsequently to the publication of Lord Augustus Loftus' despatch, His Majesty said it appeared extraordinary that Prince Gortchakow should have so little acquaintance with the geography of the countries respecting which he was making serious proposals to another Government; but I have had no opportunity of speaking to Count Andrassy upon the statement reported by Lord Augustus Loftus until yesterday, when I asked his Excellency what he thought Prince Gortchakow could have meant by it.

His Excellency said that, as the Russian proposal had been declined *in limine*, it may possibly have been intended to restrict the Austrian occupation to Bosnia, though he had not so understood it,—but that Prince Gortchakow had only to look at a map to perceive that the Herzegovina could not have formed a neutral zone between the Austrian and Russian armies.

I suggested that Prince Gortchakow may have thought that the Province might be left to the Prince of Montenegro, whose troops at the time occupied a part of it.

If, however, this were so, Prince Gortchakow may possibly have foreseen that the occupations which he proposed were not unlikely to terminate in territorial advantages to the Governments by which they were to be carried out.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Doc. 392 *Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received December 11.)

(No. 853. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Vienna, December 3, 1876.

A PERSON calling himself a Hanoverian subject, left yesterday at the Embassy a paper of which I inclose a translation by Mr. Charlton, which professes to give the secret plans of Russia in the event of war with Turkey.

The person, who refused to give his name or address, declared that he had been in the employment of the Russian Court, and had altogether spent twenty-three years in Russia and Wallachia.

The Austrian Government are probably as well informed on the points of which it treats as the writer,—but I have, nevertheless, given the original to Count Andrassy.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

(Translation.)

FROM all we can gather in Russia and Servia it seems certain that the former intends to press her proposals upon the Porte by force of arms in the event of their rejection.

Should this occur Russia intends to cross over the Pruth, and to take possession of Moldavia and Wallachia or Roumania, in order to defend herself with the least possible delay against the attack of Austria-Hungary, which is the only country able to arrest her progress at the outset.

Austria should anticipate the advance of Russia with promptness and determination, as her very existence depends upon it. The Czar pledges his sacred word that he has no wish to acquire Constantinople. I do not doubt him; the step would be inexpedient. Nevertheless the Czar has great need of Wallachia and Moldavia in order to carry out his plans, and as a protection against Austria, and here lies the main point to which I wish to call the attention of Austria before Russia comes on with her secret plans, which consist in occupying, immediately on her entry into Moldavia and Wallachia, the mountain passes which connect them with Austria-Hungary, and in constructing works of defence in these narrow passes, in order to render impossible any passage through them from the Austrian side. I am convinced that the corps which is at present being formed in Servia, and which includes among its numbers Russian soldiers and engineers, has this Russian object in view.

As soon as the Russian army crosses over the Pruth this corps will pass over the Danube at Kladowa, where preparations for pontoon bridges from the Roumanian side are in readiness, and will occupy the narrow pass on the Roumanian frontier at Vercsorova. On the right of the road is the Danube, and on the left, like a gigantic wall, surrounding Moldavia and Wallachia, is the lofty mountain range of the Carpathians, with its narrow passes connecting the two with Austria. These passes are:—Das ciserne Thor, Wulkan Pass, Rothenthurn Pass, Törzberg Pass, Tomös Pass, Bodza Pass, and, towards Moldavia, Oglos Pass, Gyömes Pass, Tölyes Pass, Borgo Pass. With these passes in a state of defence Russia would be free to mature her plans without fear of obstruction on the part of Austria. Austria would then have the choice of two alternatives—either to penetrate into Moldavia through Bukowina, which would be very difficult, with the Carpathians on the right, and the Russians on the north and left to close the way, or to enter Russian territory, which would compel the Russians to retire from Roumania.

The Czar pledges his sacred word that he does not intend to take Constantinople; he only means to occupy Bulgaria as a guarantee for the execution of the demands he puts forward on behalf of his co-religionists. The Guaranteeing Powers are opposed to this. But if once Russia occupies Wallachia, and is able to defend those narrow passes in the Carpathians which connect Austria and Roumania, then she can say, "Good; as you will not let me cross the Danube into Bulgaria, I shall remain here in Roumania, on the Bulgarian and Servian frontier side." Russia is free to press her protection upon her co-religionists whether they want it or not. She will place a Russian Prince on the Servian Throne. As for Roumania, little remains to be said. It will remain in Russian hands, and as soon as she has it in a state of defence, and is well organized, Russia will one day march across the Danube at Kladowa, occupy Servia with the connivance of the Servians, and extend herself without opposition, some day or other, towards Bosnia, Herzegovina, and Montenegro, to the Adriatic Sea, and all under the pretext of protecting her co-religionists.

Once Russia gets these Slav countries in her grasp she will slowly advance against Bulgaria, and take one fort on the Danube after another.

Russia has time enough before her. Did she not maintain the struggle for thirty years in the Caucasus before she fully established her power? Why then should she not risk thirty years for such an important conquest as Constantinople, however strongly it may be defended? With the help of all the Oriental Slavs she will no doubt succeed in obtaining possession of Constantinople, in spite of everything Europe may do to prevent it.

In this way alone can Russia possibly take possession of Constantinople. All the principal landing places upon Russian soil upon the Black Sea towards the Danube are being fortified, in order to be secure from that side. Upon the Asiatic side the Caucasus offers defence, so that Russia, as soon as she has fortified the iron gates and the passes of Siebenbürgen, will be in a position too to descend upon Roumania.

Roumania is a rich country, and possesses provisions enough to maintain a Russian army. It is therefore my duty to call attention to the importance of taking possession without delay of the passes into Wallachia and Moldavia, and of fortifying them to their very entrance into Moldavia and Wallachia, in order that Austria-Hungary may always be able to march through to defend her main artery—the Danube. And her power to do this would work in the interests of peace, and nullify all the plans of Russia.

Doc. 394 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 11.)
(No. 856.)

My Lord,

Vienna, December 7, 1876.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that General Tcherniaeff, who arrived here a few days ago, has taken his departure for Kishenew, where, as he stated to a deputation which waited upon him here, he has been summoned to be consulted upon the future conduct of operations in Servia.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Doc. 395 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 11.)

(No. 859. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Vienna, December 7, 1876.

IN a private letter which I have received from Major Gonne dated the 3rd instant from Belgrade, he states that the Commission would probably leave yesterday for the Drina, to meet two representatives of the Bosnian insurgents at Bielina, with a view to establish, if possible, a line of demarcation between any country held by them and the Turkish troops.

He states that the Russians of the regular army have left Servia, and that the rest will be formed into a separate division, who, together with the few Servians still willing to remain in arms, probably from 15,000 to 20,000 bad troops, will help to keep a fraction of the Turks in the Principality. He says the Turks are quietly sending their troops to the Danube, but will leave a small force at Zaitchar and Alexinatz. He understands that General Tcherniaeff will not return.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Doc. 396 Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 11.)

(No. 537. Most Confidential.)

My Lord,

Berlin, December 6, 1876.

WELL-INFORMED critics think that the newspapers attach too much importance to Prince Bismarck's table-talk, while his guests give very different versions of what they individually understood him to say.

Be that as it may, the speech Prince Bismarck made yesterday in the Reichstag, of which a French translation is herewith inclosed, has set aside and superseded every other private utterance attributed to him by the press on the Eastern question, and the public are in possession of an authentic declaration of the German Chancellor's policy, which is sure to be well received in Germany.

Her Majesty's Government have been acquainted with Prince Bismarck's views since January last, and he has said nothing new on the present occasion, although he has not said all, and, indeed, he declares plainly in the last sentence of his speech that he must reserve his opinion for the present as to a future settlement of the Eastern question, if the Powers should fail to localize the war between Turkey and Russia.

What he thinks, but did not say, is, that the Porte cannot guarantee that the improved *status quo* the Powers demand will be lasting or peaceful, but that, on the contrary, the Powers, to guarantee the existence of Turkish rule in Europe, will have to agree to prop up the crumbling edifice by territorial occupations, as the Catholic Powers guaranteed the existence of the Pope's temporal rule from 1849 to 1870 by occupying Ancona and Rome.

Ultimately he hopes that Austria will extend her protectorate along the Danube and over the Slav population of European Turkey, whilst England establishes her influence over Egypt and Syria, so that both Austria and England may have less to apprehend from the progress of Russia round the Black Sea.

To prevent the frequent recurrence of the Eastern question, and the danger to which it exposes the peace of Europe, the temporal power of the Sultans (like that of the Pope's) could be kept up for many years to come by a joint occupation of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus.

These are the views Prince Bismarck is believed to hold by those who know him best, and which he will gradually bring forward, modified according to the requirements of the situation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 397

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 13, 7 P.M.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, December 13, 1876, 6.30 P.M.

FOLLOWING from Monson:—

"The demarcation Commission has signed the final Protocol and dispersed. Colonel Lennox has gone to Trieste by last night's steamer."

Doc. 398

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 13, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

Berlin, December 13, 1876.

GENERAL IGNATIEW'S proposals have met with approval at Berlin, and the German Government are prepared to support any arrangement on which England and Russia can agree.

Great reliance is placed in Lord Salisbury's judgment.

Doc. 399

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 13, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Most Confidential.)

Pest, December 13, 1876.

THE copy of a telegram from the Emperor of Russia to the Duchess of Edinburgh (has been?) received here, expressing His Majesty's satisfaction with the applause which a reference to his policy in the Eastern question met with at the recent meeting in London, while alleged views of Prime Minister were condemned; and states that His Majesty is hopeful that General Ignatiew will be able to come to an agreement with Lord Salisbury.

Doc. 400 Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 14.)

No. 7.)

(Decypher.)

My Lord,

Tiflis, December 1, 1876.

FIVE hundred Russian troops arrived at Porti on 30th instant (*sic*) by steamer. A large detachment (number not yet ascertained) arrived at Tiflis yesterday.

The Abkases near Sukhum Kale have, it is said, broken out and commenced plundering the country.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. S. RICKETTS.[†]

* Repeated to Constantinople.

[†][Editor's note: recte G.T. Ricketts.]

Doc. 401 *Colonel Lennox to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received December 14.)

(Confidential)

My Lord,

Ragusa, December 6, 1876.

WHILE engaged in marking out the line of demarcation during the Armistice, the Commission had occasion to pass through Cettingé, where we had an audience of the Prince of Montenegro, by whom we were also entertained at dinner.

I consider it advisable to report, for your Lordship's information, the substance of a conversation which the Prince held with me after dinner on the 3rd instant.

I must first mention that I informed the Prince that I was employed only as a soldier, and had not anything to say with respect to diplomatic affairs.

The Prince said that it must be evident to everyone who looked at the map, that Montenegro could not be satisfied with its present boundaries, and that he must take advantage of every convenient opportunity to enlarge his Principality until he had a suitable frontier. He said that Montenegro was not such a barbarous country as it was supposed to be, but it was poor, and that it had not sufficient cultivable land, and had moreover no outlet to the sea.

I enquired what His Highness considered would be a suitable boundary, and said that I fancied that Austria would not consent to his having the Suttarina with an outlet there to the Bocche di Cattaro.

The Prince said that he did not want the Suttarina, but wished his frontier to extend along the river Susica, (to the south of Klobuk), to its junction with the river Trebinjéica, and along that river northward to its source, and then along the road leading to Korito and Cruica (the road to be common to both countries), and after that to follow the line of demarcation laid down by the Commission to Disclea; with the exception that the small triangular piece near Kolásin, left outside the line of demarcation by the Commission, should be given to Montenegro. The Prince said that from Disclea the river Moráca should be the boundary down to Scutari Lake. To the south of Lake Scutari he would like to see his boundary follow the line of demarcation laid down by the Commission, (viz., from between Sistan and Muric up to Skala,) produced to the sea, so as to give him either Antivari or Spicá as a port.

I mentioned that, while travelling as an unknown individual between Vienna and Ragusa, the conversation with others had turned upon the Montenegrin question, and that people seemed to say that it would never do to let Montenegro have a port, as it would only become a Russian harbour.

His Highness said that he would bind himself not to allow a man-of-war of any Power to enter his port if he had one.

He also said that if he had Spuz (near Podgoritz), he would demolish the fortifications around it. He observed, in conclusion, that he wanted a compact territory, and that he looked to England to see justice done to him.

When leaving the room a few minutes afterwards the Prince came up to me and begged that I would tell Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople that Montenegro only wanted justice.

On the 5th I had a conversation with the Austrian Delegate, who informed me, in confidence, that he was instructed that Austria would never consent to allow Montenegro to have the Suttarina, and mentioned that he had told the Prince so. The Austrian Delegate also told me that his Government would, he believed, consent to an extension of the Montenegrin territory to the west, but not probably to the extent of the line of demarkation. He also said that he entertained the conviction that his Government would not object to the frontier to the east being the Moracé, or to the extension asked for by the Prince to the south of Lake Scutari, including the Port of Spica or Antivari on the sea. My Austrian colleague informed me that he had received very full verbal instructions before he left Vienna.

I inclose a map, on which I have shown by a red line the frontier, according to what I gathered to be the Prince's views.

The yellow line on the same plan gives the extent to which I understand the Austrian Government would not object.

The only routes I travelled over in Montenegro were, that from Rjeka to Cettingé, and thence to Cattaro. The mountains are almost impassable, and if those I traversed are fair specimens of the rest, it is very evident that it will ever be a difficult matter for a force to penetrate into Montenegro.

Every pocket among the mountains that can contain earth appears to have been used for cultivation, even if miles away from any habitations. This would lead one to suppose that more cultivable land is a necessity for the people.

I would venture to suggest, that if some open country, such as that around Spuz, and also a seaport, were given to the Montenegrins, it would greatly diminish the chances of their making war, as they would then be vulnerable on the plain and on the coast, while they are now almost invulnerable.

I am aware that it may be considered that, in writing as I have, I have touched upon matters foreign to my mission, but they seem to me to be of sufficient importance to be brought before your Lordship's notice.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM LENNOX.*

Doc. 402 Consul Zohrab to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 15.)

(No. 41. Political.)

My Lord,

Erzerroom, December 14, 1876.

I HAVE just been informed that Samih Pasha received yesterday an offer from some of the Chiefs of the district of Djezireh, to bring up to Erzerroom 20,000 horsemen.

His Excellency was disposed to accept the offer; but finding, on reflection, that it would be impossible to accommodate such a force, he has replied, through the Governor-General of Diarbekir, that the men be kept ready to march, but not to move till further orders.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. ZOHRAB.

Doc. 403 Consul Zohrab to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 15.)

(No. 42. Political.)

My Lord,

Erzerroom, November 15, 1876.

THE unwillingness with which the Rediffs enter on active service, has just been clearly demonstrated, by two battalions of infantry which arrived here yesterday, one from Seerd, and one from Van.

The battalion from Seerd lost 200 men by desertion on the road; and the one from Van 180 men.

It is only the strong and active who can venture on desertion, as not daring to return to their villages; deserters must take to the hills, and live by brigandage. Such a life requires a robust constitution, and sound courage; and, consequently the men who remain faithful to their flag, are generally those who are not fit to undergo the hardships of a campaign.

With Turkish soldiers desertion does not arise from cowardice, but from unwillingness to fight in a cause which has become hateful to them.

Oppression and authorized exactions, which have made beggars of the peasantry, have expelled all feelings of loyalty and devotion to the Throne; hence, the classes from which the army is formed, are averse to the service, and can only be brought into it by compulsion.

When under the flag, the hardships, the sufferings, the privations, and the robbery to which the men are subjected, through the venality of dishonest, ignorant, and irresponsible officers, create a hatred for the service, which neither patriotism nor fanaticism can overcome; and thus, the thousands who annually leave the army and enter the reserve lists, become men who will resort to any means to avoid re-entering active service; and in time of war, the country becomes overrun by robber bands, composed of men who have either fled from their villages to escape being enrolled, or who have deserted from the ranks.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. ZOHRAB.

Doc. 404 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 15.)
(No. 1317.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, November 29, 1876.

GENERAL IGNATIEW spoke to me yesterday of a statement which has appeared in the English newspapers of a proposed British occupation of Constantinople, and said that he understood Engineer officers to be already here to make preparations for it.

I answered that he could not expect Her Majesty's Government to be indifferent to the chance of Constantinople being exposed to an attack, and they were no doubt considering what step it might be necessary to take if such an eventuality should appear imminent.

He asked who had ever talked of attacking Constantinople, and I replied that although the capital may not have been mentioned the occupation of a portion of the Empire had been more than hinted at, and preparations for it made upon a large scale; and if once commenced, even without any preconceived design against Constantinople, no one could foretell to what such an attempt might lead.

General Ignatiew then remarked that public opinion in England was much divided.

I said that in a country so little inclined to war public opinion would always be divided upon a case where peace was threatened, but he must not suppose that the nation would not stand by Her Majesty's Government if they found it necessary to take up a firm position in defence of recognized British interests.

I am inclined to believe that General Ignatiew had endeavoured to persuade his Government that they had no occasion to fear serious opposition from that of Great Britain in any line they might determine to adopt in regard to Turkey, but that he is now beginning to feel uneasy from the consciousness of the responsibility he will incur towards his own Sovereign if he is the cause of a rupture between the two countries.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Doc. 405 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 15.)

(No. 1320. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, November 29, 1876.

I TOOK the opportunity of my audience of the Sultan to inform His Majesty that the accounts received of the proceedings of the Commission at Philippopoli were far from satisfactory.

A disposition was shown by some of the members to shield the culprits, and I warned His Majesty of the effect which would be produced in England if the inquiry should prove delusive.

The Sultan said that his intention was that justice should be done, and he would communicate on the subject with his Ministers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Doc. 406 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 15.)

(No. 1321. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, November 29, 1876.

AT my audience of the Sultan, after Sir James Drummond had withdrawn, and when I had presented the Queen's letter, His Majesty invited me to remain to have some conversation upon the present position of affairs.

He did not doubt the friendly disposition of Her Majesty's Government, but he exhibited some apprehension lest, at the ensuing Conference, resolutions should be adopted tending to impair his independence and authority, and he hoped Her Majesty's Government would not countenance any such proposals.

I replied that His Majesty might be satisfied that, in proposing a Conference, Her Majesty's Government were animated by a sincere interest in the Ottoman Empire,

and by a wish to bring to a satisfactory conclusion a state of things which was menacing not only to itself, but to the general peace of Europe.

This critical position had been caused by the Porte's neglect during the last twenty years to improve the administration of the country, and to remove the grievances weighing upon a large class of His Majesty's subjects, and it had become a duty for the European Governments to see that the engagements taken by the Porte were now carried out, so as to put an end to the prevailing discontent, and to prevent the danger of future disturbances.

The Sultan answered that he could not attempt to deny that the Hatts promulgated in preceding reigns had been allowed to remain dead letters, or that the engagements taken had been unexecuted, but he repeated his own irrevocable resolution of giving a thorough effect to them.

He could not himself be reproached for what had been done or left undone by his predecessors. His Ministers were working day and night in elaborating measures for giving practical effect to the principles formerly accepted; and His Majesty hinted, though in very mild terms, that there would be an injustice on the part of the European Powers in interfering in the internal administration of the Empire upon the assumption of his not putting those measures into operation.

His Majesty, upon my taking leave, said that he would at all times be glad to receive me whenever I wished to see him, which I understand as an intimation that he would occasionally wish to speak to me more freely than he can do in the presence of the official Interpreter of the Divan, whose duty it is to report the conversations to the Grand Vizier.

His Majesty, although still diffident in manner, has acquired some assurance since the last audience I had the honour of having, and his object is to put those who approach him at their ease, and to encourage them to express their opinions without fear.

He tells his Ministers that he wishes them to inform him of the truth without reserve, and they assure me that he listens to them with the utmost patience and attention.

He is conscious of his own inexperience, and of his want of knowledge of public affairs, from which he had been kept secluded till he ascended the throne; but, above all, he deplores his ignorance of the character of those to whom he has to entrust the administration of his Empire, for while he is known not to be satisfied with some of those whom he found in the highest position, His Majesty does not yet feel sufficient confidence in his own judgment to venture upon making changes.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Doc. 407 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 15.)

(No. 1323.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, November 30, 1876.

THERE is one expression in Prince Gortchakow's letter to Count Schouvaloff of the ^{22nd October} to which I would wish to draw your Lordship's attention. _{3rd November}

Prince Gortchakow, repudiating all ambitious designs on the part of Russia, observes that the only wish which Russia can have is that the Bosphorus and Dardanelles should be in the keeping of a weak Power.

At intervals during the last forty years intimations have been given of this being the object of the Russian Government; and while Her Majesty's Government have desired that an improved administration, by promoting the prosperity of the country and the contentment of the populations, should strengthen the Empire, Russia has continually striven to foment the discontent of the people, and to keep it in that condition of weakness which they admit themselves to desire.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Doc. 408 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 15.)

(No. 1327.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, December 2, 1876.

THE reports which your Lordship will have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Ezzeroum of the indisposition shown by the Rediffs of that district to join the army are very different from those received from most other quarters.

The impression at the Porte is that, in the event of a war with Russia, there would be a national enthusiasm which would make it easy to collect any number of men ready to enrol themselves in the army.

I mentioned a few days ago at the Porte that, in the event of such a war, it appeared from Mr. Zohrab's Reports that the Kurds, as well as the Armenians, would be inclined to side with the Russians, but the supposition was received with entire incredulity.

Captain Burnaby, of the Royal Horse Guards, who is about to proceed to visit Kars, Erzeroum, and the neighbouring districts, tells me that he has had some conversation with the Armenian Patriarch upon the disposition of the populations.

The Patriarch had told him, as stated by Mr. Zohrab, that the Kurds were not to be relied upon.

The Armenians, on the other hand, were, he said, well affected to the Turkish Government; but the Patriarch added, with emphasis, that if the Slav Provinces were to be rewarded by exceptional privileges for having risen in insurrection against the Porte, the Armenians would probably think their interest prescribed a similar course upon themselves.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Doc. 409

Consul-General Stanley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 15.)

(No. 24. Political.)

My Lord,

Odessa, December 2, 1876.

I HAVE little to report in addition to my late political despatches.

Of the six corps d'armée mobilized four are to go to Kishenef in Bessarabia, forming an army of about 200,000 men, and the other two are for coast defence of this part and of the Crimea.

Six hundred torpedoes are said to have been laid down in the Bay of Odessa. I believe they are all fired at will from electric batteries.

An electric light has been fixed which can throw a light over the whole bay, and so show any boat attempting to pick up the torpedoes.

The total number of conscripts fixed for this year is 196,000. Those drawn in the Province of Kherson, in which Odessa is situated, are not to be allowed, as is usual, to go home on leave, but are to join the army at once.

The commissariat arrangements are generally spoken of as defective.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. E STANLEY.

Doc. 410

Mr. Stuart to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 15.)

(No. 283. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Athens, December 4, 1876.

MY despatch No. 277 of the 25th ultimo contained a version of M. Contostavlos' statement to the Chamber respecting the policy of the Hellenic Government in view of the present state of Turkey, which substantially coincides with the version which he had telegraphed to M. Gennadius for communication to your Lordship, and which you inclosed to me in your despatch No. 103 of the 14th ultimo.

I was shortly afterwards informed by my Ottoman colleague that he had remonstrated with M. Contostavlos with respect to the tone and terms of the statement in question, more particularly taking exception to the free use which he had made of the term "Grèce esclave," as applied to the Greek subjects of Turkey.

M. Contostavlos appears to have answered that it had certainly not been his intention to say anything offensive to the Ottoman Government, but that the terms "Grèce libre" and "Grèce esclave" had become conventional in Greece when talking of the Greeks of the Kingdom and of those who were still subjects of Turkey, and that he had merely employed them in that sense. He further expressed his readiness to give any satisfaction in the matter which Photiades Bey might desire, and his regret at having used words which might bear an offensive meaning.

That M. Contostavlos should have been in such a hurry to telegraph his statement *in extenso* to M. Gennadius, and no doubt also to the other Hellenic Legations, shows that his object must have been fully as much to attract the attention of foreign Powers to the importance of giving satisfaction to the aspirations of the Hellenic race as to recommend the policy of the Hellenic Government to the support of the Chamber. He is a man of singular simplicity and earnestness, the interests of Greece and of Hellenism and the dread of Slavonic encroachments being ever uppermost in his thoughts.

Indeed the alleged intrigues of Russia or of the Slavonic societies with a view to ingulf as many districts to the south of the Balkans as possible within the Slavonic zone have for some time past been viewed with the greatest alarm by the Hellenic Government and by the Hellenic people in general, and it is firmly believed that the so-called Bulgarian insurrection had been purposely fomented in the neighbourhood of Philippopolis in order that the limits of Bulgaria might thenceforth be considered to include the districts in which it had broken out.

The supposed chain, or network, of these intrigues, which are said to have been carried on with great skill and persistency for many years, has been forcibly exposed and denounced in a pamphlet entitled "*Attention aux Balkans*," which was published some weeks since either at Bucharest or at Constantinople. Several copies of it were sent from Constantinople to politicians here, where its appearance made a considerable sensation. Both M. Contostavlos and M. Simos sent their respective copies to me on the same day for my perusal; and the former had even talked of instructing M. Gennadius to translate it into English for the information of the British public, when he heard that an English translation was being made at Constantinople.

I had not hitherto noticed it in my official correspondence, as I supposed your Lordship's attention would have been called to it from the place of its publication; and I trust that such may have been the case, as I have not been able to purchase a copy here.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. STUART.

Doc. 411 *Mr. Stuart to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 15.)*

(No. 284. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Athens, December 6, 1876.

COLONEL BECKER, an ex-officer of the Russian army, who, after serving in Mexico and in Egypt, has, I believe, been acting as General Tcherniaieff's Chief of the Staff in Servia, and who is now in the Servian service, arrived here some twelve days ago, and was permitted to pay his respects to the King. He also visited some of the Greek Ministers, and inspected the artillery barracks, and obtained as much information as he could respecting the strength and organization of the Greek army and the feelings of the Greek people.

He gave out that he was not charged with any mission; and his principal object appears to have been to ascertain whether any assistance could be procured for Servia in Greece.

He has already left, and I am told that he was much disappointed at finding how little had been done here in the way of military preparations, and how little sympathy was entertained for the Servian cause.

It may be of more importance to mention to your Lordship that four German officers, two of whom are M. von Wedel and M. von Alten, have been in Greece for some weeks past, and have been engaged in taking military sketches and plans in different parts of the country, including plans of the fortress and of the remaining fortifications at Corfu. I also learn that they expect to be shortly joined by two other German officers.

It is not easy to understand what object the German Government can have in sending the above officers here on such a mission.

M. von Wedel is probably the same officer who was mentioned in Mr. Wyndham's despatch No. 153, Confidential, of the 4th of July last, as having been supposed to be engaged in the transmission of arms to Montenegro through Corfu with the knowledge of the German Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. STUART.

Doc. 412 Mr. Stuart to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 17, night.)

(Telegraphic.)

Athens, December 17, 1876.

THE Minister for Foreign Affairs has called to-day and given me positive assurances that no change of policy is intended.

He says that he has reason to suspect that General Ignatiev will endeavour to persuade the Conference to extend Bulgaria so as to include Hellenic districts, and even as far as Salonica, and that Hellenic Government will be most grateful if the British Plenipotentiaries will oppose such pretensions, and insist upon the Greeks being placed upon a footing of perfect equality with the Slavs, and admitted to the same privileges.

A copy of this is sent to Sir H. Elliot.

Doc. 413 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 18.)

(No. 870. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Buda-Pest, December 12, 1876.

THE reports received here from Constantinople represent Lord Salisbury as having accepted, in a great degree, the proposals of General Ignatiev as to the reforms to be introduced into the administration of the Christian Provinces of Turkey, and as to the guarantees which the Porte should be called upon to give for their being duly carried out.

I have cautioned Count Andrassy, however, against placing too implicit confidence in such rumours, as the Russian Ambassador may possibly hope to influence the opinions of the other members of the Conference in favour of his views by leading them to believe that Lord Salisbury does not consider them objectionable. His Excellency said, as he is also of this opinion, he has instructed Count Zichy to mention hereafter whether the statements he may report have been communicated to him by Lord Salisbury or by his Russian colleague.

In speaking upon the subject to-day, he said he had just been informed that his Lordship had accepted the principle of a foreign police force being put at the disposal of the proposed European Commission, and had suggested the expediency of employing Roumanian troops for the purpose, as being in some measure subjects of the Sultan. His Excellency said, at the same time, that he could not concur in such an opinion, if it were really entertained, as he believed the Porte would more readily consent to the employment of even Russians than of Roumanians in such a service.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Doc. 414 Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 18.)

(No. 550. Most Confidential.)

My Lord,

Berlin, December 16, 1876.

I ASKED Herr von Bülow what he thought of General Ignatiev's Reform Bill, and whether Prince Bismarck shared Count Andrassy's objections to it?

Herr von Bülow said that the German Government would continue to give a general support to the Russian proposals without impeding the progress of negotiation by initiating objections or raising difficulties, while the English and Russian Plenipotentiaries were completing their task. Great confidence was felt in the Marquis of Salisbury, and the latest news from Russia showed that the national excitement had considerably subsided, and that a general desire for a pacific solution was taking the place of the late war fever since the Conference had entered upon its preliminary discussions.

There was now every reason to expect that the Guaranteeing Powers would agree—it remained to be seen whether the Porte would accept and act upon their advice.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 415

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 19, 6.15 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, December 19, 1876, 3 P.M.

COLONEL HOME wishes following communicated to Sir Lintorn Simmons:—

“Russia had 200 waggons with telescope axles at the beginning of this year. This is authentic.

“Polish carriages will run on Roumanian lines, but must pass through Galicia.”

Doc. 416

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, December 19, 1876, 7.15 P.M.

WHAT is the meaning of Count Andrassy's statement that he would authorize Austrian Ambassador at Constantinople to sign Protocol as soon as he learns that Lord Salisbury is authorized to do so? Among the provisional propositions recorded in the telegram repeated to you on the 9th instant was a stipulation that Porte should engage for all reforms in a Protocol, and this will undoubtedly be essential, and is in accordance with the English basis; but no such Protocol can be signed till after the assent of Porte to reforms finally decided upon.

Doc. 417

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 525.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, December 19, 1876.

I HAVE found it necessary to request your Excellency to-day by telegraph to explain the statement contained in your telegram of yesterday that Count Andrassy had expressed himself as being ready to authorize the Austrian Ambassador to sign the Protocol as soon as he should be informed by Count Beust that Lord Salisbury had been authorized to sign it; as, without explanation, I am unable to understand to what Protocol Count Andrassy refers.

Lord Salisbury, in his telegram from Constantinople of the 9th instant, which was repeated to you, mentioned, among the provisional propositions which he enumerated as having been made by General Ignatiev, the point that the Porte should engage for all reforms in a Protocol. This suggestion had doubtless been made by General Ignatiev in conformity with the third basis of pacification proposed by Her Majesty's Government, and adopted by the Powers, which provides that the Porte should undertake to record in a Protocol, to be signed at Constantinople with the Representatives of the mediating Powers, its intention to grant the reforms required; but it is obvious that no such Protocol can be signed until the reforms shall have finally been decided and accepted by the Porte, which shall have consented to sign a Protocol. For this reason I should wish to have it clearly explained what is the nature of the instructions which Count Andrassy appears to expect will shortly be issued to the Representatives at Constantinople.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 418 *Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 19, at night.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, December 19, 1876, 9.30 P.M.

APPOINTMENT of Midhat Pasha at this moment is a very important event. He is beyond question the most energetic and liberal of the Turkish Statesmen, and a man of action, though sometimes too hasty in forming his decisions. He has always advocated equality between Christians and Mussulmans, and wishes to put a control upon the power hitherto wielded by the Grand Vizier as well as the Sultan.

He is opposed to centralization, and in favour of giving the provincial populations much discretion in their local affairs. He has, however, spoken strongly to me against the grant of special institutions to the Slav provinces, but he is a man who listens to argument, and may, perhaps, be brought to see necessity of it under present circumstances.

He is hated by General Ignatiev, who often spoke of him as a brigand, filibuster, and madman, and as the dislike is reciprocal it may influence his conduct. He is the hope of

all the reforming Mahommedans and Christians, but disliked by all the old Mussulmans. He always wished to follow English advice, but I do not know what his feelings towards us are at present.

Doc. 419

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 20.)

(No. 45. Political. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Bucharest, December 11, 1876.

IT would appear that the instructions given to M. Demetri Bratiano comprise a demand from the Porte to formally declare, that war shall not, under any contingencies, be brought on to Roumanian territory, in return for which, the reserves of this army would be dismissed, and the united Principalities would maintain an unarmed neutrality.

That the Porte would be committed to an engagement of this character appears to me extremely unlikely, as such an arrangement makes Wallachia a secure base of operations, and leaves intact the Moldo-Wallachian railway system.

I must also not omit to call your Lordship's attention to an incident which occurred a few days since in the Roumanian Chamber.

M. Blaremburg made an interpellation on Thursday the 7th instant, on the foreign policy of this country, neutrality, neutralization, &c.

I was present at the debate, and the reply of M. Jonesco was couched in terms of most studied deference to the Emperor of Russia and his policy in the east.

The Minister spoke of the Emperor as the illustrious reformer, of the disinterested character of Russian aspirations in the east, of the sacrifices which the Russian nation had made for the cause of Servia, &c.

All this is at distinct variance with M. Jonesco's expressed and individual views; but I believe there is no doubt that it had been conveyed to him, that if he was not prepared, in answer to the interpellation, to speak in the above sense, his place at the Ministry was at an end.

I am also secretly informed that the substance of M. Jonesco's speech had been previously submitted to Baron Stuart.

The halting indecision of M. Bratiano becomes more apparent as the dangerous moment approaches.

This Government is still open to offers on both sides, but their feebleness is so great that I doubt whether they would have the courage even to make a false step.

They will go on to the last with professions to both parties, one day assuring the Porte of their loyal disposition, the next sympathizing with the Oriental Christians in a Russian sense, until they finally fall into the trap which is being prepared for them by Russia, from whom they know they have everything to fear and nothing to expect.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

Doc. 420

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 20.)

(No. 46. Political. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Bucharest, December 12, 1876.

M. STURDZA, the Minister of Public Works, and Prince John Ghika, informed me yesterday in the most serious manner that when at Livadia Prince Gortchakow said firmly to M. Bratiano, "if you do not go with us you must be crushed;" and that M. Bratiano replied, "you may crush us, but you will esteem us."

Your Lordship will recollect that M. Jonesco, in a conversation which I reported in my despatch No. 23 dated October 19th, studiously concealed the above expressions of Prince Gortchakow, and distinctly affirmed that the Prince and M. Bratiano had had no conversation of a political character.

I shall take the earliest opportunity of pointing out to M. Jonesco that, in keeping back an incident of such importance, he has deliberately kept Her Majesty's Government in ignorance of a matter which is of the highest interest to your Lordship, and a question of vital existence to this country.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

Doc. 421

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 20.)

(No. 47. Political.)

My Lord,

Bucharest, December 13, 1876.

AMONG other conjectures respecting what might or might not take place in this country in the event of a passage or occupation by Russian troops, is a project that Prince Charles and his Government would leave his place and repair to Tirgouesti, Krajova, or elsewhere in Little Wallachia.

The above has several influential partisans in the Cabinet, and is much discussed as a possible contingency.

Your Lordship will probably not think it premature of me to request instructions should such a project be put in execution.

In such a moment British subjects and interests would be in special need of protection, and were your Lordship to desire me to follow the Prince and his Government, some arrangements would be necessary.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

Doc. 422 *Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 20.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, December 20, 1876.

COUNT ANDRASSY referred to the Protocol or the Minutes of the proceedings and resolutions of the Plenipotentiaries at the preliminary Conference; he doubted the expediency of the Plenipotentiaries signing such a document, but telegraphed to Count Beust on the 17th instant that he would authorize its signature by Count Zichy if Lord Salisbury was authorized to sign it. As his Excellency returned here yesterday I have done so likewise.

Doc. 423 *Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 23.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, December 23, 1876, noon.

I HAVE been unable to attend the three last preliminary meetings, and there is little probability of my being able to attend the Conference with any regularity.

As, if I remained at Constantinople, my absence from them would be sure to be taken here as the result of a disagreement with Lord Salisbury, and would encourage the Turks to resist, I have determined, in the public interest as well as in justice to myself, to leave in the first week of January.

I have taken care, in making my determination known, to guard against this misinterpretation.

I am most grateful for the kind expressions in your telegram, but hope you will not ask me to sacrifice myself beyond my strength.

You will believe me when I say how painful it is to me to be obliged to leave at such a moment as this, but it cannot be avoided.

Doc. 424

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(Telegraphic.)

(Confidential.)

Foreign Office, December 23, 1876, 5:30 P.M.

MR. STUART reported from Athens on the 4th instant that the Russian squadron was going to the Baltic with orders to put into a German port if all the Russian ports are closed by ice.

Doc. 425 *Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 23, at night.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Pera, December 23, 1876, 6:30 P.M.

THE Constitution has been read and proclaimed. It establishes a Chamber of Deputies and a Senate. Ministers are declared responsible, and the press free. All

subjects of the Sultan, without distinction of creed or race, to be styled Ottomans, a designation hitherto taken by the Mussulmans alone, and all Ottomans are declared equal before the law, and to have the same rights and duties, but their admission to public employment is dependent on their knowledge of Turkish, the official language of the State. Personal liberty and domicile are declared inviolable, and torture in every shape is absolutely prohibited. The number of Deputies is fixed at one for every 50,000 male population; the election being by ballot, according to a law to be prepared. Judges to be immovable and the Courts open. No tax to be levied except in virtue of a law, the Assembly voting each Article of the Budget; and no expenditure to be made beyond the Budget, which is voted for one year, and a "Cour des Comptes" will examine the annual expenditure. The Provinces to be administered on the basis of decentralisation, and a law will regulate on a large basis the elections for the Councils of the Provinces, Districts, and Cantons. Municipal affairs to be conducted by elective Municipal Councils.

Doc. 426 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 24.)
(No. 1347.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, December 10, 1876.

A NEWLY appointed Bulgarian Roman Catholic Bishop has received a Berat from the Porte recognizing his authority over the Bulgarians of that religion, and will proceed at once to Adrianople.

Previous to the Bulgarian schism the discontent prevailing against the Greek Patriarchate having induced some thousand Bulgarians to join the Roman Catholic Church, a Bishop was appointed to superintend them, and a very large number of the people were expected to follow the example of their countrymen.

The movement was warmly supported by the French Government, but the Russian Government, in support of the Orthodox Church and of the Patriarchate, resorted to a step which for audacity surpassed what would have been thought possible in these days.

The Bishop was by some stratagem induced to go on board the Russian stationnaire at Buyukdéré, from whence he was sent to Odessa and afterwards to Kiew, where he has been retained ever since.

Such at least is the account of the occurrence given to me by Monseigneur Hassoun, the spiritual representative of the Papal See at Constantinople, who adds that he had taken measures to ascertain whether the Bishop had returned to the Greek faith, but had found that he adhered firmly to the Roman Catholic Church.

The story is an old one, having occurred in 1860 or 1861, but it shows how little harmony is likely to prevail among the Representatives of the Powers if invested with the right of interference in the administration of the Provinces.

Monseigneur Hassoun has expressed the earnest hope that the authority of the Porte may not be so much impaired as to give additional influence to the denominations able to count upon foreign support, which are far less tolerant than the Turkish Government to any whom they regard as their rivals.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Doc. 427 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 24.)
(No. 1348.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, December 10, 1876.

THE "Courier d'Orient," a paper known to be inspired by the Russian Embassy, has published the letter, of which the inclosed is an extract, showing the limit of the Bulgaria of which the creation is advocated.

This delimitation, which, probably, represents the most extreme Bulgarian pretensions, would reach on the west to within about sixty miles of the Adriatic, and including, on the south, Salonica and the coast of the Ægean, it would pass to the Black Sea by a line which comes within about fifty miles of Constantinople.

When the arrangements were being made for the creation of the Bulgarian Exarchate about six years ago, the Porte considered it a point of the utmost importance, while conceding to the Bulgarians what they desired with respect to their Church Government, to avoid the creation of a geographical Bulgaria, and the feeling of the Imperial Government on the subject is not likely to have undergone any modification.

I have had occasion to report to your Lordship that the Russian Emissaries had, for some time previous to the late insurrection, been encouraging the Bulgarians by the hope of their province being erected into an autonomic Tributary State, and the creation of a large geographical Bulgaria would be regarded as the first step towards that result.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Doc. 428 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 1, 1877.)

(No. 1386.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, December 25, 1876.

I HAVE the honour to inclose the copy of a telegram which I received two days ago from Vice-Admiral Sir James Drummond, stating that he proposed to proceed with the fleet to Salonica on the 26th instant.

The Marquis of Salisbury, to whom I communicated it, having received your Lordship's instructions that the Porte should be given to understand that they need expect no support from Her Majesty's Government should a rupture with Russia occur if it rejected the proposals to be made by the Powers in Conference, considered that it would be desirable for the fleet to go to Athens instead of remaining in Turkish waters, and I intimated his Lordship's wish to Admiral Drummond by the telegram, of which a copy is inclosed.

With a chance, however, of the Conference closing in a manner likely to cause much exasperation among the Turks towards foreigners, and especially towards Great Britain, I thought that, for the protection of Her Majesty's subjects, in case of need, two ships ought to remain at Besika, from whence they might be called up to Constantinople if required, one at Smyrna and one at Salonica.

The Marquis of Salisbury having asked whether I thought there would be any danger if the four ships did not go to the stations I had suggested till next Monday, I said that I saw none whatever, and I this morning sent the Admiral the further telegram as inclosed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Doc. 429 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 1, 1877.)

(No. 901. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Vienna, December 28, 1876.

COUNT CAROLYI, the Austrian Ambassador at Berlin, arrived here two days ago and will, I understand, leave again this evening for his post. Lord Odo Russell has reason to believe that he was summoned here by the Emperor, whereas, it is said here that he came to Vienna with a message from the Emperor of Germany. However this may be, his presence is naturally connected by the public with a Council, which takes place to-day at the Palace under the presidency of the Emperor, who has arrived from Pesth for the purpose, and which will be attended by Count Andrassy and the Ministers of Finance and War of the Monarchy, and by the Prime Ministers and Finance Ministers of Austria and of Hungary.

The expected arrival at Vienna this evening of General Rodich may also be connected with the questions to be discussed at the Council; among which, telegrams from Pesth in the Vienna papers of to-day consider that those pending between Austria and Hungary will not be included.

Rumours have lately been in circulation of a considerable force having been prepared for active service, but from what I learn to-day, they do not seem to be well founded, and it would appear that nothing has, as yet, been done with a view to the entrance of Austro-Hungarian troops into Bosnia and the Herzegovina, beyond the establishment of magazines on the frontiers, and more particularly at Spalato, where, I am told, that everything is readiness which an army entering the Turkish provinces would be likely to require.

I ought to add, with reference to Count Carolyi's presence here, that, in answer to my inquiries at the Foreign Office as to its object, I have been assured that it was arranged some weeks ago that he should have a fortnight's leave at Christmas, a statement which, if true, considering the shortness of his stay, will hardly account for it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN

Doc. 430 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 1, 1877.)

(No. 904. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Vienna, December 29, 1876.

COUNT ANDRASSY, whom I saw this morning, appears to be far from satisfied with the state of affairs at Constantinople. His last telegrams, however, merely report Lord Salisbury's audience of the Sultan, and the minatory attitude which had been assumed by the Plenipotentiaries, of the expediency of which he evidently entertains doubts, although he has assented to it.

He considers Russia to be now as anxious for peace as she was apparently some weeks ago for war, and he is, therefore, of opinion that she will be satisfied if the reforms recommended by the Conference are accepted by the Porte as the basis of an arrangement; but he fears that the difficulty of the situation will not have been entirely overcome even if the Turkish Government consent to all that has been asked of them, as he does not see how the proposals of the Conference are to be carried out, or the next steps which are to be taken.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Doc. 431 Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 1, 1877.)

(No. 567. Very Confidential.)

My Lord,

Berlin, December 27, 1876.

PRINCE BISMARCK read to me to-day an extract of a report from the German Ambassador in London of the 20th instant, stating that your Lordship had told him that Her Majesty's Government could not exercise any special pressure on the Turkish Government to compel them to accept the advice of the Conference if they were unwilling to do so.

His Highness then showed me an autograph letter from the Emperor, in which His Majesty expressed the regret he felt at the information conveyed in Count Münster's despatch, and requested Prince Bismarck to call upon me and beg of me to tell your Lordship confidentially from His Majesty that he feared the Turks would be encouraged to resist if the Six Powers did not exercise an equal pressure on the Porte to enforce the acceptance of the measures they had agreed upon in Conference.

Resistance on the part of Turkey would lead to war with Russia—a contingency His Majesty would deeply regret, and which he could not but think might be prevented by an equal and unanimous pressure on the part of the Guaranteeing Powers in Conference assembled to compel the Porte to keep the peace, and carry out their recommendations without further hesitation or delay.

Prince Bismarck said that, in obeying the Emperor's commands, he refrained from any comment of his own, as he felt sure that Her Majesty's Government would do all in their power to enforce the advice of the Conference in the interest of peace.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 432 Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 1, 1877.)

(No. 568. Secret.)

My Lord,

Berlin, December 27, 1876.

IN the course of a conversation I had this morning with Prince Bismarck on Turkish Affairs his Highness observed that he had raised no objection to the proposals agreed upon in Conference at Constantinople by the Representatives of the Guaranteeing Powers, so as not to impede their labours, but that, in his own private opinion, there were some points he failed to appreciate. For instance, the employment of Belgians to enforce the decisions of the Conference appeared to him rather a dangerous experiment if attempted at all, and not unlikely in principle to increase the difficulty of prevailing upon the Porte to accept the whole scheme of reform submitted to them.

He could not, of course, ask the German Parliament to vote money for the maintenance of a Belgian police in Turkey, but since some doubt was still admissible as to the measure being practically carried out, he would say no more for the present on the subject. He suspected that the original first suggestion had been made to England by

the King of the Belgians, who naturally wished to increase the importance of Belgium in Europe.

I said I had received no positive information on the subject, but that I believed the idea to have been suggested by General Ignatiew.

Prince Bismarck replied that, to the best of his knowledge, it came from England, and he then read me a report from the German Ambassador at St. Petersburg, stating that the Czar had just announced a new proposal to him made by England, to employ Belgians, which his Majesty was willing to assent to, since Her Majesty's Government, who recommended the measure, thought it would be found generally acceptable under existing difficulties.

Another point Prince Bismarck said he did not appreciate was the withdrawal of the Embassies in the event of the refusal on the part of Turkey to act on the advice of the Powers.

It was natural Russia should withdraw her Embassy, because Russia wished to fight Turkey, but Germany did not, and there were German subjects and German interests that required the presence and protection of accredited Agents in the East.

It was easy enough to break off relations with another country, but often difficult to renew them, so he had agreed to instruct the German Ambassador to come to Berlin on leave of absence, but he would not recall the German Embassy altogether.

His Highness then asked what Her Majesty's Government had decided to do in the event of the Porte's refusal.

I said that I was not yet in possession of any details respecting the negotiations at Constantinople, nor did I know how Her Majesty's Government intended to meet a possible refusal on the part of the Turkish Government to accept the advice of the Conference; but since we were friends, and not enemies, and had considerable British interests to protect in Turkey, I felt justified in assuming that a Chargé d'Affaires would remain in charge of Her Majesty's Embassy if the Ambassador should solicit or be granted leave of absence after the Conference.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 433 Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 1, 1877.)

(No. 569. Secret.)

My Lord,

Berlin, December 27, 1876.

PRINCE BISMARCK told me to-day that he greatly regretted to find that he had failed in his endeavours to interest the Marquis of Salisbury in the fate and welfare of Austria.

He gathered from the latest reports that his Lordship had negotiated principally with General Ignatiew, and had paid less attention to Count Zichy, which had produced at Vienna mixed feelings of regret, disappointment, isolation, and envy.

The immediate result was a struggle on the part of the Austrian Government to establish relations with Russia as cordial as those of England, and on the part of the Russian Government to take advantage of the weakness and isolation of Austria, and assume a dictatorial tone, which was more likely to do harm than good in the future.

He (Prince Bismarck) was the first to rejoice at the existence of cordial and intimate relations between England and Russia, and he would deeply regret to see those relations become less friendly than they are, but at the same time he anxiously desired that Austria should come in for a share of England's good-will and moral support, and be on equal terms of friendship with England, Russia, and Germany.

The moral support and friendly interest of England would go far to regulate and equalize the relations between Austria and Russia, and would help to postpone the grave consequences to which a quarrel between those two Powers might sooner or later give rise.

A quarrel between them might lead to the resignation of Count Andrassy, and a change of Government to a change of policy.

Ministers were not wanting in Austria ready to join Turkey in declaring war to Russia, a calamity Germany would do her utmost to prevent; and he most ardently desired to see the influence of England exerted to promote those friendly relations between Austria and Russia that were so essential to the maintenance of peace in Europe.

He had perfect confidence in Count Andrassy's policy, and he sincerely hoped Her Majesty's Government would give him what moral support they could, so as to postpone a change of Government if a crisis should occur in Austria.

I asked Prince Bismarck whether he thought Russia equal to a conflict with the combined armies of Turkey and Austria.

"Certainly not," his Highness replied, "Russia would find it hard enough to fight Turkey single-handed."

The Russian army was ill prepared for invasion, while the Turkish army was in excellent condition for defence.

In reply to some further questions of mine, Prince Bismarck said that the war party in Russia consisted of women and priests, led by the Empress and encouraged by Prince Gortchakow, who wished to end his career with a flourish, whilst the peace party in Russia was composed of the army, at the head of which was the Czar.

The policy of Livadia had proved to be as different from the policy of St. Petersburg as night and day.

However, notwithstanding the distressing disclosures brought to light by the mobilization of the army, the Czar had been led on too far to retrace his steps entirely, and if the Turks rejected the advice of the Conference he could not well avoid a warlike demonstration.

It would be imprudent to attempt to cross the Danube in winter, except, perhaps, to establish communications with Belgrade, but the Pruth could always be crossed, and winter quarters taken up in Roumania.

I asked how Prince Charles of Roumania would receive the Russian invaders.

Prince Bismarck said that Prince Charles could not do otherwise than receive them well, but that he had shown so little aptitude for administration that his position was precarious, and if he could not maintain himself Germany could give him no support, having no real or national interest in keeping him there. Happily Prince Charles' father was rich enough to provide for him if he should be compelled to retire into private life again.

After some further conversation, of no immediate interest, Prince Bismarck repeated that he was heartily glad that England, Russia, and Germany were so cordially united, and that he hoped her Majesty's Government would also share the deep interest he felt in the welfare, safety, and maintenance of the Austrian Empire.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 434 Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 1, 1877.)

(No. 571. Secret.)

My Lord,

Berlin, December 29, 1876.

I HAVE been secretly informed, but I cannot vouch for the report, that the Austrian Ambassador's journey to Vienna is connected with a secret inquiry on the part of Count Andrassy as to whether he could reckon on German support in the event of Austria being compelled, in her own interest, to take the part of Turkey against Russia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 435 Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 1, 1877.)

(No. 573. Very Confidential.)

My Lord,

Berlin, December 29, 1876.

THE information sent by the German Ambassador on the 20th instant to Berlin, that Her Majesty's Government would not exercise any special pressure on the Turkish Government to compel them to accept the advice of the Conference, if they were unwilling to do so, mentioned in my despatch No. 567, Very Confidential, of the 27th instant, has also been received from Paris.

The Marquis d'Harcourt writes in the same sense as Count Münster to his Government, but while the German Ambassador uses the word "pressure," the French Ambassador uses the word "coercion," in reporting the conversations with your Lordship, in which the subject was discussed.

The attitude of Her Majesty's Government is, I believe, perfectly well understood by the German Government; but the German Emperor appears to have thought that if the Porte refused to act on the advice of the Conference, the six Powers would recall their Representatives simultaneously; indeed, Dr. Busch, Chief of the Oriental Department in

the Foreign Office, has already left Berlin to take charge of the Embassy when Baron Werther leaves Constantinople.

I have been confidentially assured that the German Emperor thinks so ill of the Russian army that he fears war would be disastrous to Russia, and give the Sultan an easy victory over his nephew the Czar, and that that is the reason for which His Majesty is now more than ever anxious that peace should be preserved.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 436

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 2.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 1, 1877.

IT has been proposed by General Ignatiev that the Plenipotentiaries of the six Powers, who attended the Preliminary Conference at Constantinople, should sign an act of which the following is the operative clause:—

“Plenipotentiaries declare that propositions laid before the Porte have been deliberated in common, and that they contained the essential bases of the arrangements to be concluded with the Porte. They all engage, consequently, to sustain them in Conference, and to support them ‘auprès de la Porte,’ to give an evident proof of the union of their Governments which should cultivate powerfully to the maintainance of peace, the Plenipotentiaries have signed this Act.”

Lord Salisbury has requested that he may be furnished with authority to sign this act, provided that the Austrian Plenipotentiary is authorized to sign. I have great doubts on the subject, and should wish your Excellency to ascertain and report to me what course the Austro-Hungarian Government are disposed to adopt.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 437

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 1. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, January 1, 1877.

COUNT SCHOUVALOFF called upon me this afternoon, and read to me a telegraphic message which he had received from Prince Gortchakow.

General Ignatiev, Prince Gortchakow says, telegraphed yesterday to explain that the Protocol which it is proposed that the Plenipotentiaries of the Six Powers should sign is only a *procès-verbal* for the purpose of putting on record the agreement which exists as to the bases decided on, but that it leaves the door open for any modifications on which the Plenipotentiaries may agree.

Such a Protocol would, by its nature, counteract the intrigues now being carried on at Constantinople for the purpose of producing an impression that the apparent understanding between the Powers does not really exist, and that Russia is likely to detach herself from the rest, in order to come to a direct arrangement with Turkey.

Prince Gortchakow goes on to say that it was England which took the initiative as regards the meeting of the Conference; that the Turks have replied to the proposals of Europe by counter-projects, which are absurd, and inconsistent with the bases proposed by England, and with previous engagements; that the dignity of Europe is compromised; and that we are rapidly approaching a rupture of relations.

Prince Gortchakow urges the necessity of our taking a firm and energetic attitude, which, he says, is the only means of averting eventual war.

I thanked Count Schouvaloff for his communication, but did not think it necessary to make any observation on the views put forward in it.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 438

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 2.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, January 2, 1877.

AS the act referred to in your Lordship's telegram of yesterday declares what has been already notified to the Porte, Count Andrassy does not clearly understand its object.

He has received no report respecting it from Count Zichy, and until he does so he cannot express a positive opinion as to expediency of signing the proposed instrument. He thinks, however, it might be signed without danger or inconvenience if, after the word "peace" a clause were added stating "it is, however, understood that it shall be open to the Porte to propose modifications in the details and as to the manner of carrying out the views of the Powers." Without a clause of this kind to show that the proposals made to the Porte shall be subject to discussion, he said that the Conference would be a useless formality. When he hears from Count Zichy he will instruct him to communicate with Lord Salisbury in order that they may arrange such common action on the subject as their respective instructions may point out.

Doc. 439 *Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 2.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Rome, January 2, 1877.

THE suggestion said to have originated in a conversation between Count Chaudordy and General Ignatiev that the Conference should assemble elsewhere in the event of the Turkish Government definitively declining discussion of programme by Conference and adhering to their own finds favour here.

It is thought that if the Representatives of the Powers are withdrawn and Turkey is left tête-à-tête with Russia, two dangers are to be apprehended:—

1. The Porte, unfettered any longer by diplomatic control, may appeal to religious feelings of its subjects, and the result may be an ebullition of fanaticism in different parts of the country hitherto undisturbed, but where the position of the Christians is precarious.

2. If Russia does not feel herself sufficiently strong to undertake the campaign alone she may possibly propose territorial advantages to Austria in order to receive her co-operation, thus entailing a participation of European Turkey by those two Powers with the sanction of Germany.

Should the suggestion above referred to be followed and an Italian town be selected as the new place of meeting, the Italian Government would be flattered at the choice.

I telegraph this at request of Count Tornielli, though instructions in above sense have been sent to General Menabrea.

Doc. 440

The Earl of Derby to Lord Lyons.

(No. 4.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, January 2, 1877.

THE French Ambassador called upon me this afternoon to know what I had heard as to the proceedings of the Conference, and to see whether his reports agreed with mine, which they did in every detail. His Excellency went on to express an opinion, which I understood to be that of his Government, to the effect that the absolute and peremptory rejection by the Porte of the proposals of the Powers, which appeared to be inevitable, constituted an insult to Europe, which it would be impossible to pass over. He thought the Powers ought now to consider whether some further step shall not be taken, as a mere withdrawal of Ambassadors seemed hardly adequate to meet the requirements of the situation.

I said that Her Majesty's Government had from the first laid down the course which they intended to adopt in the event of a refusal, which I have always regarded as not improbable, and that I saw no reason, as at present advised, to depart from the policy already announced.

His Excellency proceeded to dwell upon the danger of a war once declared between Russia and Turkey extending to other Powers, and on the possibility of England becoming, however unwillingly, involved in it.

I told his Excellency that, so long ago as last summer, I had warned Musurus Pasha that the Porte must not expect material assistance from England in the event of a Russian war, and if we had held that language then, much more should we do so now, when the Porte by refusing English advice had forfeited even such claim to English help as it might be previously supposed to possess. On the other hand, I could not, I said, hold out any expectation to the French Government that we should join in measures of coercion against Turkey; and such being the case, we could not directly or indirectly use menaces which we did not intend to carry into execution.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 441 Consul Barker to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 3, 1877.)

(No. 40. Political.)

My Lord,

Canea, Crete, December 16, 1876.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship a copy of a despatch which I have this day addressed to his Excellency Sir Henry Elliot, reporting details on the present working of the "Organic Law" in Crete, and describing the dissatisfaction manifested by the Christian inhabitants with the actual Government in the island, as so also in some measure by the Mahommedans.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWARD B. B. BARKER.

Doc. 442

Inclosure in Doc. 441.

Consul Barker to Sir H. Elliot.

Sir,

Canea, Crete, December 16, 1876.

AT this moment that the Powers are in Conference at the capital, and about to decide the question of the Christian populations in the northern provinces of Turkey, your Excellency may perhaps wish to know how the Organic Laws have been working in Crete since their establishment.

The following is the actual state of things:—

As I had the honour to report to your Excellency in my last despatch of the 4th instant, all the inhabitants in this island, but more particularly the Christians, are much dissatisfied with the Tribunals, and with the acts of his Excellency the Governor-General, whose Government does not enforce payment of debts, and this causes a complete stagnation in trade and in business of every kind. But in reality his Excellency is not entirely to blame; the antagonism existing between the two rival creeds, and the violent hatred openly manifested to one another by both parties, prevent the proper working of the Tribunals and the impartial administration of justice, and the Organic Law has become a dead letter.

Without entering into the circumstances which during the last eight years have gradually led to this state of things, I may briefly say that the actual Government in this island is virtually that of the Sultan, independent of any other, warily administered at this moment in a vacillating manner by Réoup Pasha, who happens to be a well-disposed man; but there is no union among the inhabitants, no wish to work together for general interests, no bearing and forbearing, and from one moment to another, at any time, an insurrection of the Christians may be expected if external political causes arise to ignite the sparks always ready to create a conflagration.

And yet there never could be better Regulations (upon paper) than those embodied in the Organic Law, none which would appear to ensure a just and impartial administration, and one calculated to satisfy every class and creed; but the animus to put them into execution is wanting. Violent religious fanaticism on both sides (whose only thought is how to crush one another) has shipwrecked the good intentions of the Powers who engaged the Porte to grant this concession to Crete. The Christians are still dissatisfied, and so also in some measure are the Mahommedans, which renders particularly necessary the garrisoning of the 150 block-houses which have been built in every part of the island during the last insurrection, and the maintenance in complete working order of the system of signals established, exclusive of the telegraph.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWARD B. B. BARKER.

P.S.—In proof of what I have said I have the honour to report that the British Consular Agent at Rettimo, M. Tréfelli, has had in hand three sentences from the Tribunal condemning three Turks to pay sums of money on regular bonds, and he has not been able for the last two years to obtain payment.

E. B. B. B.

Doc. 443

Acting Consul Freeman to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 3, 1877.)

(No. 65. Political.)

My Lord,

Bosna-Serai, December 21, 1876.

THE idea having latterly again become prevalent here that an occupation of these provinces by Austria is probable and even imminent, I think it my duty to inform your Lordship what impression this prospect appears to make on the various component parts of the population. The Catholics, it is well known, would view such an occupation with the greatest satisfaction, but the Orthodox population, although they would undoubtedly offer no opposition, are not altogether pleased at the prospect of being subjected to Austrian domination, as they consider it would be a fatal blow to the realization of all Panslavistic aspirations. The more important question, however, is the effect such an occupation would produce on the Mussulman element. I have conversed on the subject with some of the leading and most influential Mahommedans of the place, and their opinion seems to be that the native Mussulmans, who are thoroughly disheartened, would of their own initiative, offer no opposition, nor create any disturbance; but at the same time, they said that they are a people so easily led, and by nature and habit so obedient to all constituted authority, that should they be instigated to it by their Government, they might probably offer very considerable resistance.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWD. B. FREEMAN.

*Doc. 444 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.**—(Received January 3, 4.10 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, January 3, 1877, 1.10 P.M.

MIDHAT PASHA stated yesterday to Mr. Sanderson that the meeting of foreign Representatives at Constantinople was a fortunate event for Turkey, which had hitherto placed strict reliance on maintenance of Treaty of Paris, but now opened her eyes to fact that it no longer exists.

Left thus to deal with Russia single-handed, she must trust to fate or throw herself into the arms of that Power, as perhaps the safest course now left open to her.

He would, however, be the last man in the Empire to advocate latter alternative, as repulsive to his own feelings and to desire that his country should continue to follow its traditional policy of reliance on Western Powers.

He still hoped that there yet would be some change in public opinion in England and that people would awaken to the injustice of sacrificing the interests of a whole Empire to Parliamentary considerations.

His Highness concluded by stating that General Ignatiew had intimated that nothing could be easier than for Russia to come to an understanding with Turkey, but that it was not possible for him to state in writing terms on which this could be effected as long as he was obliged to act in concert with his colleagues at the Conference.

Doc. 445

Acting Consul Cumberbatch to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 3, 6.15 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

Belgrade, January 3, 1877, 3 P.M.

IN consequence of prolongation of armistice, great many Russian officers and men still in the Servian army have given in their resignation, and will leave in regular companies, it is reported, to Bessarabia.

Doc. 446

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.†—(Received January 3.)

(Telegraphic.)

Bucharest, January 3, 1877.

GOVERNMENT of Roumania protest against Roumania being called a privileged province and Roumanians termed Ottoman subjects in the Turkish Constitution.

Unless answer be favourable, next tribute may be refused.

* Repeated confidentially to Embassies.

† Repeated to Constantinople.

Doc. 447*The Earl of Derby to Lord Lyons.*

(No. 5.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, January 3, 1877.

THE French Ambassador called upon me this afternoon wishing to know, on behalf of his Government, what answer I was prepared to give to the proposal put forward by Italy that in the event of Turkey refusing the proposals of the Conference the Representatives should not separate, but leave Constantinople, and hold their meetings in some place outside the Turkish dominions.

I said that I had not heard the idea discussed until yesterday, nor did I know what was likely to be thought of it by the Powers generally. I could, therefore, express only a personal opinion; but to me the proposal appeared open to grave objections, and attended by no single advantage. Her Majesty's Government, I said, had from the first objected to a Conference sitting on Turkish affairs in which a Representative of the Porte should not be present. Nor was it clear what the new, or revived, Conference was to do. It was not to bring about an agreement among the Powers, for they were agreed already; it was not to coerce the Porte, for the use of coercive measures had been expressly disclaimed by England. What, then, was to be the result of its meetings? I added, as a third reason against the scheme, that the English Representative at the Conference was a member of the Cabinet, and the Head of an important public Department, and that his absence from England could not be unduly prolonged.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 448*The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.*

(No. 6. Secret and Confidential.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, January 3, 1877.

THE German Ambassador made to me this afternoon two communications which must be regarded as of a personal and private character, inasmuch as his Excellency said that he had no authority to speak to me on the subject.

He told that Prince Bismarck was opposed to the idea which had been suggested of Conferences of the Representatives of the six Powers being held at Venice or some other town out of the Ottoman dominions in case of the failure of the present negotiations at Constantinople. The plan, Count Münster said, did not recommend itself to Prince Bismarck, and would not receive the support of the German Government.

His Excellency added that Prince Bismarck was also, as at present advised, disinclined to agree to the Act or Protocol which it been had proposed that the Plenipotentiaries of the six Powers should sign with regard to the terms of arrangement submitted by them to the Porte in the Conference. Prince Bismarck objected to giving the consent of the German Government to the signature of an instrument of this nature without having knowledge of its complete text and of the purposes for which it was designed, and he would not with his present information authorize its signature by the German Plenipotentiary.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 449*The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.*

(No. 8.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, January 3, 1877.

THE German Ambassador called upon me to-day, and said that he was instructed by his Government to make the following statement to me:

That the general state of the administration in Turkey, and the way in which the troops have been recruited, had caused great excitement and irritation among the Mahommedan population of Syria and Palestine.

That this irritation was directed generally against all European settlers, as they are all more or less held responsible for the troubles in Turkey.

That the German colonies in Palestine, in the neighbourhood of Jeffa, Kaïffa, and Beyrout, who were on the very best terms with the Mahommedan population, were beginning to suffer greatly, and life and property were more or less in danger.

That the German Government had anxiously avoided any interference in the affairs of Turkey, but that it might become a duty to protect the German subjects living in those parts.

That the German Ambassador at Constantinople had been instructed to draw the attention of the Turkish Government to these facts, and to express the firm expectation that the Porte would immediately take the most effective measures in order to prevent such excesses on the part of the Turkish population.

And that the German Government would feel very grateful if Her Majesty's Ambassador could be instructed to support the representations of his German colleague.

I replied that Her Majesty's Government had not received information of any apprehended danger to the security of foreign subjects at the places he had mentioned, but that they would be ready to support the Government of Germany in any representations which the circumstances might require, and that I would send instructions to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople accordingly.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 450 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 6, 1877.)

(No. 1390.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, December 27, 1876.

I LEARN upon authority which I believe to be good, but am unable absolutely to guarantee, that General Ignatiew is endeavouring to persuade the Turks that their wisest course is to trust entirely to Russia and to come to a direct understanding with her.

He intimates to them that the proposals to which they entertain such a natural repugnance are not his, but those of the Marquis of Salisbury, omitting, of course, to add how much his Lordship had reduced the demands which he himself was desirous of bringing forward.

With regard to the Greeks, whose irritation, as I have previously reported, is daily becoming more intense against the Guaranteeing Powers for confining themselves to the reforms to be secured to the Slavs, there can be no doubt of the efforts now being made by him to throw the responsibility and unpopularity on others.

Several of the Greeks with whom I am acquainted, some of them having long been intimate with General Ignatiew, have told me that the General had assured them of his own wish to put them exactly upon the same footing as the Slavs, but that he had been opposed and defeated by the Marquis of Salisbury.

I may add that the Ambassador's declarations produced no impression upon the gentlemen in question, and are not likely to have any on their countrymen in general, whose present exasperation against Russia is very great; but it cannot be denied that they entertain a strong feeling of resentment against Her Majesty's Government for being a party to proceedings which they believe to be as injurious to their interests as to the tranquillity of the Greek Provinces.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Doc. 451 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 6, 1877.)

(No. 1398.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, December 29, 1876.

MILITARY preparations are being pushed on here with the utmost activity, and the men now being enrolled comprise fathers of families, only sons, and others who are exempted from service except in times of extreme emergency.

In most parts of the Empire the call has been answered with alacrity; but in some, especially Aleppo and Erzeroom, it has been received with sullen discontent, and with irritation against the Christians, who are looked upon as the source of the sacrifice the Mussulmans are called upon to make.

The figures given of the force that can be assembled to resist invasion are very large, but according to the most trustworthy information they exaggerate to more than the usual extent the number of really available men.

It is a mystery to everyone how the Government hope to find the means of meeting the expenses of even a short campaign; but there can now be little doubt that they and

the country are resolved, at all hazards, to resist to the utmost rather than accept without a struggle what they regard as dishonourable and fatal conditions.

There are indications, on the other side, that the Russians look upon war as 'equally certain.

General Ignatiew may have expressed a hope that peace would be preserved, but from the time of the acceptance of the ultimatum the younger members of the Embassy and persons connected with it have never ceased to talk of their departure being merely temporarily deferred, and their preparations have quite latterly been resumed, as though they thought the moment of it to be drawing near.

The ready acceptance by General Ignatiew of the prolongation of the armistice to the 1st of March, by which it is extended almost exactly to the period at first proposed by the Porte, and at that time so summarily rejected by Russia, is full of significance.

If, however, I may venture to hazard an opinion, I would say that the game of the Russian Embassy will probably be to attempt to throw the whole blame of the ultimate rupture upon the Turkish Government.

General Ignatiew must have been perfectly aware that the projects to be submitted to the Porte contained much to which its acceptance was not likely to be obtained, except after important modification in the Conference.

By objecting to such modifications he will be able to represent the consequent rupture of the negotiations as the result of the rejection by the Porte of arrangements approved by all the Powers, and he will thus endeavour to obtain a sort of moral European sanction for the measures which his Government may think proper to adopt.

He has throughout been desirous that the decisions taken in the preliminary meetings should have the form of an ultimatum to be imposed upon the Porte, and although defeated in this attempt by the other Plenipotentiaries he may be expected still to give the projects the character which he wished them to have.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Doc. 452 Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 8.)

(No. 4. Most Confidential.)

My Lord,

Berlin, January 4, 1877.

THE Austrian Ambassador's journey to Vienna at the invitation of Count Andrassy, and his Excellency's frequent interviews with Prince Bismarck since his return to Berlin, have given rise to a good deal of speculation, but their exact object has not been disclosed.

Among the various interpretations given to this Austro-German exchange of ideas I have heard one, for the accuracy of which I cannot vouch, but which I am inclined to think correct. It is as follows:—

Count Andrassy, finding that Russia, by her conciliatory attitude in the Conference, has gained the moral co-operation of the Powers, which Turkey is losing by her resistance to their advice, is alarmed at the influence Russia may acquire over the Slav populations, to the detriment of Austria, who owns 16,000,000 Slav subjects.

Count Andrassy is described as being deeply and seriously annoyed at the practical understanding established between the Marquis of Salisbury and General Ignatiew, which he had flattered himself the traditional policy of England would have rendered impossible.

War between Russia and Turkey, he feels, would be extremely inconvenient to Austria; and if it were to be localized, and the Powers to persist in withholding material assistance from Turkey, it is more than probable that in the long run Russia would gain advantages which Austria would have reason to regret.

Encouraged by Prince Bismarck's speeches in favour of Austria, Count Andrassy appears to have instructed the Austrian Ambassador to sound the German Chancellor as to the amount of support, moral or material, Austria could expect from Germany if, by threatening to take up the cause of Turkey, she arrested the advance of Russia altogether.

Events having now clearly proved that Russia is financially and administratively unprepared for war, and that when ready, after the armistice is over, she will only be strong enough to fight one Power, but not two, Count Andrassy holds that Austria is in a position to break up Turkey, or paralyze Russia for years to come, by declaring for either Power, that is, if she can reckon on the benevolent neutrality of Germany.

His wish, as a Hungarian, is, of course, to oppose Panslavism, the leadership of which the Czar has assumed by his celebrated Moscow speech.

Hungary owes a grudge to Russia for her suppression of the Hungarian war in 1848, and a debt of gratitude to Turkey for her protection of the Hungarian refugees the year following. Both Hungary and Turkey have an equal interest in opposing the Slav element which Russia has summoned to her assistance, and which threatens the independence, and, indeed, the very existence of the Hungarian Government and of the Porte.

The moment is favourable for resistance, as the combined forces of Austria and Turkey are more than a match for Russia; and Count Andrassy appeals to Prince Bismarck for support or benevolent neutrality.

Prince Bismarck, however, if I am correctly informed, has declined to commit himself and Germany to an anti-Russian policy, and has recommended a strict adherence to the maintenance of peace as well as of the Northern Alliance, as the safest policy for Austria.

The Austrian Ambassador returns to Vienna and Pesth to-morrow to "shoot pheasants," as he tells his friends and colleagues.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 453 Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 10.)

(No. 19.)

My Lord,

Paris, January 9, 1877.

M. ETIENNE C. SCHENDRÉ, who takes the title of Diplomatic Agent of Roumania at Paris, called upon me this afternoon and said that he was desirous of directing my attention to the wording of the new Ottoman Constitution. There were, he said, in that document expressions which had caused the greatest irritation in his country; and this feeling had been unfortunately increased by the language of Safvet Pasha, the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, who had maintained the correctness of terms which implied that the Roumanians were to be styled Ottomans, and their country was a Province.

M. Schendré expressed a hope that by the influence of the Guaranteeing Powers at Constantinople the Porte would be led to remove effectually all misunderstanding as to the position in which Roumania was placed by the ancient Capitulations and by modern Treaties.

He read to me, from a book which he had brought with him, French translations of parts of the Capitulations, and he pointed out to me in particular a Treaty of Commerce concluded by Queen Elizabeth in April, 1588, with a Prince of Moldavia.

He told me that he was going to London for a short visit, in a few days' time, but not with any special diplomatic mission.

He observed that when the time came he should very probably be entrusted with the negotiation of the definitive Treaty of Commerce between Roumania and England as well as of that between Roumania and France.

He stoutly denied that the Jews in the Principalities are either ill-treated or discontented. The complaints made to foreign Governments by the Israelite Alliance and such bodies were, he uncompromisingly maintained, the results of an agitation got up abroad, to which the Jews actually in Roumania were entire strangers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

Doc. 454

*The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Paget.**

(Telegraphic.)

(Confidential.)

Foreign Office, January 10, 1877.

ITALIAN Ambassador tells me that his Government believe Austria meditates an immediate occupation of part of Bosnia in case Conference breaks up unsuccessfully. In that case Italian Government fear a general agitation in Italy for annexation of the Trentino.

* Repeated to Constantinople, Vienna, Berlin, St. Petersburg, and copied to Paris.

Doc. 455

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.

(No. 22.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, January 10, 1877.

THE German Ambassador called upon me this afternoon and spoke to me of the modifications which, it is understood, that the Plenipotentiaries at Constantinople have agreed to make in the proposals submitted by them to the Porte. He said that the German Ambassador at Constantinople had not reported anything on the subject to his Government, and that Prince Bismarck was ignorant of the nature of the proposed concessions. His impression was, however, that it was intended to embody the proposals so modified in some form of ultimatum, which should be binding on the Powers for subsequent negotiations. Count Münster asked whether Her Majesty's Government had agreed or were disposed to agree to such a course.

I told his Excellency that we agreed to the concessions and approved of them, thinking them an improvement on the original proposals. We had not, however, consented, and should not agree to the presentation of them in the form of an ultimatum, nor to their being embodied in a Protocol or other document, which should be binding on the Powers. Her Majesty's Government would object to such a proceeding, inasmuch as they had not given their consent to the scheme, whether in its original or modified shape, as conveying the ultimate decision of the Powers, but as proposals put forward as a basis for further discussion.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 456

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Paget.

(No. 13.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 10, 1877.

THE Italian Ambassador called upon me this afternoon and asked me some questions as to the prospects of the Conference, which I answered to the best of my ability.

His Excellency then went on to say that his Government were very anxious that some agreement should be come to as to the course to be followed in case of the Conference breaking up without result. The ground for their anxiety was that they had reason to believe that in such an event Austria meditated the immediate occupation of a portion of Bosnia.

I thanked General Menabrea for this communication, but said that as I presumed his Government did not hold to the integrity of the Ottoman Empire simply as an abstract idea, he would perhaps allow me, speaking frankly, to inquire in what manner Italy would be specially affected by an occupation or annexation of part or the whole of Bosnia by Austria.

General Menabrea replied that his Government would be indirectly but very materially affected by such a step. There was a portion of the Trentino, the annexation of which to the Italian Kingdom had always been strongly desired by a certain party in Italy. The possession of this district was of considerable military advantage to Austria, and she had retained it. But the sympathies and disposition of the inhabitants were entirely in favour of union with Italy. As surely as Austria took any steps towards the acquisition of fresh territory at the expense of Turkey, so surely would a cry be raised throughout Italy for compensation in the form of a cession of the district in question. Recent events had proved that a Government might be forced by popular sentiment into a course from which it was itself adverse, and the Italian Government were desirous of avoiding, as far as possible, the chance of their being placed in such a position.

I again thanked his Excellency for the frankness of his communication.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 457

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, January 11.)

(Télégraphique.)

Constantinople, le 10 Janvier, 1877.

DANS la dernière séance de la Conférence un long Mémoire a été lu au nom des Représentants Etrangers pour répondre à notre refus d'accepter les propositions des

Puissances, et pour soutenir le premier programme de l'Europe sous une autre forme. Ensuite, Lord Salisbury a pris la parole et appuyé fortement le même programme. Les Représentants Etrangers ont insisté sur l'institution de la Commission Internationale comme offrant une garantie pour la bonne administration des trois provinces. Nous avons dû repousser cette proposition, et la discussion ainsi suspendue a été renvoyée à la séance prochaine qui aura lieu demain.

L'Ambassadeur d'Angleterre vient de nous communiquer un nouveau projet. Il y a dans ce projet des propositions admissibles; mais les points contenus dans ce nouveau programme concernant la nomination des Valis avec l'assentiment des Puissances Garantes, et la gendarmerie organisée avec le concours d'officiers et de sous-officiers Européens ne sauraient être acceptés par le Gouvernement Impérial.

Nous insisterons sur la nomination des Valis suivant les dispositions de la Constitution.

Nous proposerons la formation d'une gendarmerie de Musulmans et de Chrétiens, ainsi que l'institution de deux Commissions composées en nombre égal de Musulmans et de Chrétiens qui seront chargées de veiller à l'exécution des réformes constitutionnelles dans les provinces, de veiller à la prohibition du port des armes sans une autorisation spéciale du Gouvernement Impérial, et d'exécuter les décisions à prendre à l'égard des mêmes provinces. Vous savez qu'à la rencontre de la Note Andrassy, nous avons institué une pareille Commission pour la Bosnie.

Doc. 458 *Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received January 11.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Pera, January 11, 1877, 11 A.M.

WITH reference to Lord A. Loftus' telegram, repeated by you yesterday, I do not believe that in the event of the Conference breaking down there is the slightest chance of Turkey declaring war against Russia.

Doc. 459 *Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 11, 3 P.M.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, January 11, 1877, 11 A.M.

AT my audience of the Sultan yesterday, I strongly urged the necessity of an immediate acceptance of proposals submitted by Plenipotentiaries, and represented that the points to which exception had been taken by the Porte had been so much modified by the exertion of the Marquis of Salisbury that any true friend of Turkey would deplore their rejection and the consequences to which it must lead.

The conversation turned almost entirely upon the International Commission.

The Sultan said that if it were only a question of naming an English Commissioner, or even English and French Commissioners, he would not hesitate for a moment, as he knew our Governments to be animated by goodwill towards Turkey, but he could not feel the same as regards some of the other Governments.

He asked me how it was proposed to constitute the Commission, alluding, I imagine, to the part to be taken in it by a Turkish Commissioner.

I was not in a position to give this information, but I left the Sultan with a strong impression that no insuperable objection will be made by him to the appointment of a Commission for a limited period with an Ottoman member upon it.

Doc. 460

Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 11, 2.28 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

January 11, 1877, 12 P.M.

CONSUL at Galatz reports, "Russian contractor is here negotiating for the supply of flour, biscuits, &c."

* Repeated to St. Petersburg.

Doc. 461

*The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.**

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, January 11, 1877, 4.10 P.M.

ODIAN EFFENDI has mentioned to me to-day a suggestion that the Constitution recently decreed for the Ottoman Empire, together with new provincial Administration to be drawn up, should be made a matter of international agreement between Turkey and the Powers, who would then have a right to watch over its execution. This plan, he said, Midhat Pasha would be ready to bring forward as a counter project to the scheme of reforms and guarantees proposed in Conference, which (especially the guarantees) the Porte felt they could not accept.

I declined to express an opinion on this proposal, stating that it would be inconvenient to discuss here matters which were in negotiation at Constantinople, and I again urged the expediency of the Porte submitting to conditions which they might consider disadvantageous rather than risk a war single-handed with Russia.

Doc. 462 *Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 11.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, January 11, 1877, 4.45 P.M.

I DO not know how Italian Government can have received the information referred to in your Lordship's telegram of yesterday, as the Italian Minister here says that Austria will not occupy Bosnia immediately, even if a Russian force enters Bulgaria.

Count Andrassy stated some time ago he would meet any movement in Italy to annex territory by rectifying the Austrian frontier at her expense.

I hope to see his Excellency to-morrow at Pesth.

Doc. 463

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.†

(Telegraphic.)

(Most Confidential.)

Foreign Office, January 11, 1877.

COUNT SCHOUVALOFF positively assures me that there is an intimate understanding between Austria, Germany, and Russia. He speaks of it as a fact for which he can vouch. I hear, however, on good authority, that Count Andrassy has lately held language quite inconsistent with any such relations, and has boasted of "privately propping up" the Turks. I give these two statements as they reach me, but incline to think the latter the more credible of the two.

Doc. 464

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, January 11, 1877.

LORD SALISBURY telegraphs—"German Ambassador informs me he has received renewed orders to decline formally that he will not suffer any abatement of the proposals."

Doc. 465 *Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12, 1877.)*

(No. 1405.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, December 30, 1876.

ALTHOUGH it is usual for an Ambassador to call upon the Grand Vizier immediately on his nomination it was not till two days ago that I was well enough to pay the customary visit to Midhat Pasha.

We have long been intimate, and knowing the support I had always given to his efforts to introduce the radical reforms required in the administration of the country he spoke with the greatest freedom of the present position of affairs.

There was, he said, in the proposals of the Plenipotentiaries much that was practical and important to which he was ready to give a willing assent.

* Repeated to Berlin, Vienna, St. Petersburg, Rome, and copy to Paris.

† Sent also to Sir A. Buchanan.

They were based upon the principle of decentralization for which he had long contended, and which was now formally adopted, but they carried it further than even he could admit.

The project as it now stood would be a step towards the certain realization of the Russian dream of creating small autonomic States in European Turkey.

We had only to look back to what had occurred fifty years ago in Servia to become convinced that the compulsory confinement of the Ottoman troops to the fortresses and principal towns would shortly lead to the expulsion of the Turks from the Province, and the establishment of its quasi independence.

It was proposed, moreover, that the Governors-General should be practically selected by the foreign Powers, and a position assured to them, rendering them almost independent of their own Government.

The assignment of a third or of any fixed proportion of the revenues of the Province to Imperial purposes was a principle differing little from a tribute in disguise to which it was impossible for the Porte to consent, and the proposal bore on the face of it evidence of having been drawn up by persons who could not by possibility be in possession of the information required for dealing properly with the fiscal requirements of a country respecting which their information was necessarily superficial.

The proposed guarantees for the execution of the reforms were of a nature which no Turkish Minister could agree to; for though he admitted that war might be nearly the ruin of the Empire, the country was unanimous in preferring the chance of honourable ruin to the acceptance of conditions which were considered dishonourable and, at the same time, fatal.

To a Commission of Control, composed of foreigners, with administrative and legislative powers as was proposed he never would consent, nor would he acquiesce in the presence of any corps of foreign troops.

The Turkish Minister at Brussels had indeed reported that the Belgian Government would not send such a corps except upon the direct invitation of the Porte, which invitation would never be given at the dictation of foreign Powers.

The Porte was, however, quite ready of its own initiative to engage foreign officers, non-commissioned officers, and men to organize an efficient gendarmerie or police force, but these must be in the service of the Ottoman Government.

On the other hand, while he was compelled to reject the guarantee proposed by the Powers he was willing to offer them others which he thought should be held sufficient.

Let a fixed time, say a year, be granted to the Porte for carrying out the reforms now being inaugurated, and at the end of that period let the Ambassadors report whether they were being fairly executed or not.

If they report in the negative the Porte will submit to the appointment of an International Commission, or such other form of control as may be held desirable.

Midhat Pasha concluded by saying that he perfectly understands that he has no assistance to expect from Great Britain, but he expressed the hope that if Russia now proceeds to endeavour to carry out her long cherished designs against the Turkish Empire she will meet with no support from Her Majesty's Government.

I need not repeat to your Lordship the arguments I used in trying to overcome His Highness's objections.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Doc. 466

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, January 12.)

(Télégraphique.)

Constantinople, le 11 Janvier, 1877.

DANS la séance d'aujourd'hui de la Conférence, nous avons proposé l'institution d'une Commission composée en nombre égal de Musulmans et de Chrétiens pour la Bosnie et l'Herzégovine, et nous avons déclaré même que la Sublime Porte est disposée à procéder à la nomination de cette Commission conformément aux bases contenues dans la note du Comte Andrassy en date du 13 Février. Quant à la nomination des valis avec l'assentiment des Puissances, nous avons dit de nouveau les raisons qui ne nous permettent pas d'acquiescer à ce point, et nous avons donné des assurances formelles sur le choix et sur la stabilité de nos Gouverneurs. Les Plénipotentiaires étrangers ont considéré notre proposition et nos considérations comme constatant une divergence d'opinion, et ils n'ont pas continué la discussion.

La prochaine séance est fixée à Lundi.

L'attitude des Représentants des Puissances n'indique point que leurs dispositions précédentes relativement à un départ éventuel aient été modifiées.

Doc. 467 Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12.)*

(Telegraphic.)

(Confidential.)

St. Petersburg, January 11, 1877, 3 P.M.

WITH reference to your telegram of yesterday, I have reason to know that a perfect understanding exists at this moment between the three Emperors in regard to Eastern affairs which renders improbable any isolated action on the part of Austria, and would check any ambitious aspirations of Italy.

Russia makes use of Italy as a check on Austria, while Italy hopes for Russian support for her views of aggrandizement.

Should the Conference break up without result, it is not probable that the three Emperors will accept passively the affront offered to Europe by Turkey, and consequently a combined action may be proposed similar to former Russian proposal.

Isolated action on the part of either Russia or Austria is not likely.

Doc. 468 Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.†—(Received January 12.)

(Telegraphic.)

Scutari, January 11, 1877.

THE Turkish Commander-in-chief informs me that the agitation among Mirdites alluded to in my despatch No. 92 of the 31st ultimo is being increased to a dangerous extent through Russian and Italian instrumentality. His Excellency has news of a projected landing of 500 Italians on the coast between Durazzo and Alessio, and has telegraphed to Constantinople for the naval force on this station to be increased.

He tells me that well-known Montenegrin Chief Mareutoseclu has passed into Mirdite mountains.

Doc. 469 Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.‡—(Received January 12.)

(Telegraphic.)

Rome, January 12, 1877.

THE Italian Government have always thought, as frequently reported, that Russian invasion of Bulgaria would be followed by an Austrian occupation of Bosnia, but they have not fresh data on the subject. I am assured, and believe that there is not any feeling in the country generally on the Trentino question, though there may be among a certain number of individuals in the frontier provinces, but the strictest orders have been given to the Prefects to prevent any acts which might justify complaints by Austria.

The policy of the Italian Government is the maintenance of the existing geographical arrangement, and this is one of the reasons, as I am again informed, why they are in favour of the Conference not breaking up, but removing elsewhere if Turkey refuses terms proposed.

Doc. 470 Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Confidential.)

Berlin, January 12, 1877, 12.5 P.M.

THE language of the German Ambassador at Constantinople does not imply a change of policy on the part of Germany, but the contrary.

German Emperor I am told thinks that the Conference will change policy of Powers, if the Powers do not put a limit to the spirit of concession which animates the Conference, and which the Emperor thinks encourages the resistance of the Porte.

* Repeated to Embassies.

† Sent to Constantinople.

‡ Repeated to Paris, Constantinople, St. Petersburg, Vienna, and Berlin.

Doc. 471 Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Most Confidential)

Berlin, January 12, 1877.

COUNT SCHOUVALOFF is perfectly right, there is an intimate understanding between Austria, Germany, and Russia.

Count Andrassy's policy, "privately propping up the Turks," is after all in the interest of Russia, and not in that of Turkey.

Doc. 472

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

Buda-Pesth, January 12, 1877, 5 P.M.

ON my observing to-day that a report is in circulation that the rupture of negotiations at Constantinople will be followed by an Austrian occupation of a part of Bosnia, Count Andrassy said that it was impossible to say what the interests of Austria may eventually render expedient, but if ever she occupied Bosnia, it will not be in consequence of the breaking up of the Conference.

Doc. 473

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Confidential.)

Buda-Pesth, January 12, 1877, 6 P.M.

I ACQUAINTED Count Andrassy this morning with the substance of the suggestion made to your Lordship yesterday by an Agent of the Porte, and your answer to it.

His Excellency expressed no opinion as to the expediency of its adoption, but if the Turkish Constitution could be carried out, which he does not believe, it would lead to the dissolution of the Empire.

He considers it, however, a master-stroke of Midhat Pasha, as Russian troops can no longer enter Bulgaria with proclamation of free institutions on the point of their bayonets. As the Porte, therefore, has given more than Russia would offer to Bulgaria, and Servia is crying for peace, there is no longer a decent pretext for war; and Emperor of Russia being earnestly desirous of peace, we may hope will be preserved by the Porte accepting the arrangement on the basis of the late proposals of the Conference as Turkey has already had a diplomatic victory in the moderation of the demands to which Russian pretensions have been reduced.

His Excellency fears, however, that no arrangement will be lasting, for, as the financial difficulties of the Porte will always cause discontent (adventurers?) will easily excite new insurrections.

Doc. 474

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Most Confidential.)

Pesth, January 12, 1877, 9.30 P.M.

THE Emperor said to me to-day that nothing could be more satisfactory than the assurances which he receives of the Emperor Alexander's desire to maintain peace, but he finds it difficult to reconcile them with the expensive preparations of the Russian Government for war.

This language, together with that of Count Andrassy, which I report to-day, is inconsistent with understanding which, according to Count Schouvaloff, exists between the Powers.

Doc. 475

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 14, morning.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Confidential.)

Pesth, January 13, 1877, 10.20 P.M.

BEFORE receiving Lord A. Loftus' telegram of yesterday I said to Count Andrassy that the Russians are alleged to pretend to have an understanding with Austria, and he answered that the report is like their sending him a telegram stating that England and all the other Powers had agreed to sign the Protocol prepared by General Ignatiev, and that the assent of Austria alone was wanting.

I have since said to him that it is now rumoured that Russia, instead of invading Turkey if the Conference fails, will renew her proposals for a joint occupation of Northern Provinces by herself and Austria. To this His Excellency replied she had done this once and was not likely to do so again.

I can only report observations made by his Excellency in private conversations, and (? leave) your Lordship to form your own opinion of them.

Doc. 476

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 14, morning.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Most Confidential.)

Pesth, January 13, 1877, 11.15 P.M.

SINCE my telegram of this afternoon Count Andrassy tells me that news just received from Constantinople is not satisfactory, as he finds the original proposals to the Porte have been less modified than he understood them to be, and that so much has been left that there is little probability of their being accepted.

I had some hesitation in referring to alleged declaration of the German Representative in the Conference, but whatever it may have been his Excellency said is had surprised him.

Doc. 477

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 14.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Rome, January 14, 1877.

MINISTER for Foreign Affairs has also received information of certain agitation among Mirdites, but (repudiates?) the idea that Italy has anything to do with it. His Excellency had not heard of projected landing of Italians, but will nevertheless have orders sent to prevent any embarkation from coast of Italy. He suggests that as Mirdites are Catholics, priests may perhaps be implicated.

With reference to part of Lord A. Loftus's telegram of 12th instant, I do not believe Italian Government entertain any views of territorial aggrandizement.

Minister for Foreign Affairs is evidently much annoyed and surprised at General Menabrea's communication to your Lordship, and does not know on what information it was founded.

Doc. 478

Consul Sanderson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 16.)

(No. 4. Political.)

My Lord,

Galatz, January 10, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to report that I this day telegraphed to Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General at Bucharest informing him that there had arrived at Galatz a contractor, who was in negotiation for the purchase of stores, such as cattle, flour, biscuit, &c., for the Russian army of the South.

This gentleman's name is Baron M. von Krant; he came here from Jassy, and will proceed hence to Ibraila and Bucharest. He has telegraphed for some one from

* Repeated to Paris, Berlin, Vienna, Constantinople, and St. Petersburg.

Bucharest to meet him, and I am told that a considerable purchase of preserved meats is in contemplation at that place.

He stated, in conversation with a British merchant, that there are 180,000 men at Kicheneff, and 80,000 at Tiflis, and that they will be ready to march in twelve days.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PERCY SANDERSON.

P.S.—I have just heard that Baron von Krant has left for Ibraila but will return to-morrow. He has at present concluded no contract.

Doc. 479

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha. January 16.)

(Télégraphique.)

Constantinople, le 15 Janvier, 1877.

DANS la séance d'aujourd'hui de la Conférence, le Marquis de Salisbury a présenté, au nom de ses collègues, un nouveau projet qui, quoique mitigé sous plusieurs rapports, contenait toujours les deux points relatifs à la Commission Internationale et à la nomination des Valis avec l'agrément préalable des Puissances. Sa Seigneurie a prononcé en même temps un discours pour déclarer que, dans le cas où ce nouveau projet définitif ne serait pas accepté par la Sublime Porte jusqu'à Jeudi prochain, il n'y aurait plus de base de discussion et qu'elle sera obligée de quitter Constantinople.

Tous les Représentants des Puissances ont tenu le même langage, en ajoutant qu'ils laisseraient ici des Chargés d'Affaires. Le Général Ignatiev seul n'a pas ajouté qu'il remettrait la gestion de l'Ambassade de Russie à un Chargé d'Affaires. J'ai répondu que la Sublime Porte ne saurait adhérer d'aucune façon aux deux propositions susmentionnées; que, quant aux autres points, le Gouvernement Impérial est disposé à entrer en discussion si les deux propositions sont définitivement écartées du programme. J'ai conclu en disant que la question sera soumise à un Conseil Général.

Je dois ajouter que le Sultan, le Ministère, et toute la nation sont unanimes pour rejeter catégoriquement les deux propositions dont il s'agit. Il est certain que le Conseil Général qui va se réunir, et auquel les Patriarches aussi sont invités à prendre part, n'y consentira à aucun prix. Parmi 30,000,000 d'Ottomans il n'y pas un seul qui pût les accepter, excepté peut-être quelque individu malintentionné. Ce n'est pas une concession raisonnable qu'on nous demande, c'est une proposition injurieuse, c'est la mutilation de l'Empire. Le Gouvernement Impérial ne pourra jamais laisser entamer son indépendance avant d'avoir épuisé tous ses moyens de résistance; et, comme c'est une question de vie ou de mort pour lui, il doit agir en conséquence.

Veillez entretenir de ce qui précède le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères et me télégraphier sa réponse.

Doc. 480 *Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received January 16.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Most Confidential.)

Vienna, January 16, 1877.

THE object of the Russian Ambassador's visit to Pesth has been to urge Count Andrassy not to be influenced by Midhat Pasha, who, he said, is endeavouring to cause disunion among the members of the Conference by holding different language to each, and who had offered to accept Russia's wishes for the extension of Montenegrin territory to the sea, if General Ignatiev would support him in other questions.

Count Andrassy answered that he was as anxious as the Russian Government for a successful issue of the Conference, but he could not sit at General Ignatiev's feet like Count Zichy.

Doc. 481

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 16, night.)(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.)*Berlin, January 16, 1877, 5.16 P.M.*

PRINCE BISMARCK desires me to assure your Lordship that there is no change whatever in his policy, and that he cannot understand what can have led to this erroneous supposition.

He objects to signing the final Protocol proposed by Russia, and hopes Her Majesty's Government will equally reject it.

Doc. 482

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, January 17, 1877, 4 P.M.

WITH reference to your telegram of yesterday, inform Prince Bismarck that the British Plenipotentiaries are not authorised to sign any Protocol.

Doc. 483

The Earl of Derby to Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield.

(No. 2.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 17, 1877.

I TRANSMIT herewith a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Paris, reporting his conversation with M. Schendré,* who takes the title of Diplomatic Agent of Roumania at that capital, upon the subject of the objections entertained by the Government of Prince Charles to the wording of certain articles in the new Ottoman Constitution; and I have to instruct you to report how far M. Schendré is justified in stating that the Jews in the Principalities are neither ill-treated nor discontented.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 484

The Earl of Derby to Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield.

(No. 5.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 18, 1877.

M. SCHENDRÉ, Agent for Roumania in Paris, being in this country, wrote to me a few day ago to request an interview, and called upon me this afternoon by appointment.

He spoke to me at some length of the position of Roumania, and of the desire of the Roumanian Government to avoid taking part in any contest that might ensue between Russia and Turkey, denying that there was any desire on the part of Prince Charles or his advisers to ally themselves with the former Power. They were, on the contrary, afraid of Russian designs, and wished to keep free from Russian influence. M. Schendré asked whether it would not be possible to guarantee to Roumania a neutral position similar to that of Belgium.

I said that the proposal was one to which Her Majesty's Government might, perhaps, have no objection, but it could scarcely be made to the European Powers collectively, for it would, in fact, amount to barring to Russia her principal opening for attack upon Turkey, a measure to which she could not be expected to give a willing consent.

M. Schendré then inquired whether a portion of Roumania could not be neutralised, leaving open only that part which might be requisite for the access of Russian forces directed against Turkey.

This, I said, seemed to me no more practicable than his previous suggestion, for its effect would be to point out and, in some degree, sanction such a mode of aggression.

M. Schendré asked whether the matter could not be laid before the Conference.

I replied that I thought this also was impossible. The Conference had met for the consideration of other questions, and its sittings were drawing to a close. I added, however, that I understood the difficulties of the position in which Prince Charles found himself placed, that I quite believed that his Government were sincerely desirous of maintaining a neutral attitude, and that I should be very ready to receive and consider any representations which they wished to address to me on the subject.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 485 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 18, 6·26 P M.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, January 18, 1877, 4 5 P.M.

A LARGE General Council, to which the proposals of Powers were submitted, has unanimously rejected them. Details later.

Doc. 486

Safvet Pasha to Aleko Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, January 19, 1877.)

Le 26 Décembre, 1876.

J'AI reçu la dépêche que votre Excellence a bien voulu m'adresser le 6 Décembre, relativement à la mission du Prince Ghika en Europe.

Cette mission doit avoir, en effet, pour but d'assurer, avec l'appui des Puissances Garantes, la neutralité absolue des Principautés-Unies en cas de guerre entre la Turquie et la Russie. M. Démètre Bratiano, qui se trouve actuellement ici, travaille dans le même sens.

Doc. 487

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Paget.

(No. 26.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 19, 1877.

THE Italian Ambassador informed me to-day, in conversation, that the Italian Consul at Scutari in Albania, who has been charged with complicity in the Mirdite Insurrection, has been called upon for an explanation, and absolutely denies the imputation. He declares that he has only a slight acquaintance with the Russian Consul, and none whatever with the chiefs of the insurrection, and that, far from having in any way aided or abetted insurrectionary movements, he has done all in his power to preserve tranquillity.

General Menabrea added that the Italian Consuls have instructions to use their best efforts for the pacification of any disturbances.

As regards the state of Albania, his Excellency observed that apprehensions appeared to exist lest the old privileges of the Province should be done away with by the new Constitution.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 488

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Paget.

(No. 27. Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 19, 1877.

THE Italian Ambassador remarked, in conversation to-day, that he heard the Austrian Government were concentrating troops in Dalmatia, and that he supposed their intention was to occupy Bosnia in concert with Russia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 489 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 19, night.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, January 19, 1877, 5.30 P.M.

AT the Grand Council Grand Vizier made statement so moderate as to call forth marks of disapprobation.

He pointed out that the decision about to be taken might result in a war of which he vividly described the danger, pointing out that Russia might possibly not be the only Power to go against Turkey.

The Council was unanimous in deciding that appointment of International Commission and the control upon the nominations of Governors-General must be rejected at all risks, the Christian members being as resolute as the Mussulmans.

Grand Vizier said that, with the exception of those two points, there was nothing on which an understanding might not be come to, and he suggested that a guarantee for the execution of the reforms which should satisfy the Powers might be given by a formal communication to the Conference of the new Constitution, which was based upon the principles insisted on by it.

The acceptance of the Andrassy Note would be confirmed, including the formation of Commissions composed equally of Mussulmans and Christians for the Provinces of Bosnia, Herzegovina, the Danube, and Adrianople.

If the Conference consented to continue negotiations upon this basis, he saw no reason to despair of a favourable result. Some objection was made to this as affording the Powers too much right of interference, but no decision was taken upon it, and I imagine the Government to be still free to follow the course adopted by Grand Vizier.

Doc. 490

Consul-General Stanley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 20.)

(No. 1. Political.)

My Lord,

Odessa, January 2, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to report that Mr. Vice-Consul Wagstaff informs me that, owing to the opposition of Admiral Arkas, Military Governor of Nicolaief and Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Black Sea Fleet, and of the dockyard authorities at Nicolaief to the scheme mentioned in my despatch, Political, No. 25 of 12th December of converting the pontoons into a floating battery, the execution of the plan has been abandoned for the present. Among other objections Admiral Arkas considered the cost excessive, and that all the skilled labour available in the arsenal was immediately required for more important objects.

One of these objects, Mr. Wagstaff stated to be the arming of some of the steamers of the Russian Steam Navigation Company, with heavy mortars to be fired by an improved galvanic battery at the moment the vessel is on an even keel, and that experiments had been made, which when the vessel was rolling as much as 36° showed 87 per cent of successful shots.

Such firing would be damaging to the decks of ironclads, but it may be doubted if such results were really obtained.

Mr. Wagstaff says that the Vice-Admiral Popoff sustained severer damage than was believed at the trial of her guns, reported in my despatch, Political, No. 17. After being repaired she made a second trial, and the result was still unsatisfactory.

He mentions as of some importance that the Novgorod's 11-inch guns are only served with a charge of 63lb. avoirdupois per cent., and the line of fire throughout the sweep of the turret, as with the "Peter the Great," is over a low freeboard, therefore, no vibration or unsteadiness is produced, whereas the "Vice-Admiral Popoff" has a raised deck immediately under her guns (12-inch), and surrounding the turret, and in firing the charge of 144 lbs. avoirdupois per cent. the vibration and strain appears to be too heavy, so it has been decided to strengthen the upper deck by placing fresh girders between every two existing girders.

Mr. Wagstaff adds that the seamen of the Black Sea Fleet have, contrary to all expectations, been informed that on completing their seven years' service, they will be placed on the reserve list.

They are a very fine body of men, much superior in station to the soldiers, but there are not many of them, and indeed, with the exception of the two Circular Ironclads, which, when their defects shall have been made good, may be considered as among

the most powerful vessels afloat in shallow waters, the whole Russian Navy in the Black Sea is not a match for one modern corvette.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. E. STANLEY.

Doc. 491

Acting Vice-Consul Gardner to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 20.)

(No. 6.)

My Lord,

Poti, January 3, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to report the arrival at Poti of the 41st Regiment of the Line, and as the whole staff of this regiment with baggage, carriages, ambulances and equipments have been brought by rail it is evident Poti is intended to be the head-quarters of this regiment for some time.

The whole of the towns and villages on the coast of the Black Sea north of Poti are now quite deserted, but it appears this has been caused by the threatened outbreak of the Abkassians more than the dread of the Turks.

1,600 troops and 400 Cossacks were despatched by steamer to maintain order, and by the return steamer fifty prisoners from the neighbourhood of Soukum Kati were landed at Poti.

2,000 troops are stationed at Moltagua, five miles south of Poti, where a temporary camp has been formed, earthworks thrown up, and four guns placed. Nearer to Poti a small battery containing two guns has been erected; on the island between the north and south outlets of the River Rhion a battery has been raised containing six guns, and north of Poti, at Abada, a battery containing four guns has been constructed. Immense quantities of stores, provisions, dry goods and merchandize of every description are landed at this place to be passed through the Custom-house before the new tariff comes into operation.

Petroleum, sugar, and several other articles have already advanced in price 25 per cent.

Mr. G. T. Ricketts, Her Britannic Majesty's Consul at Tiflis, in passing through to his post, gave instructions to forward all intelligence respecting the movements of troops, the landing of ammunition, &c., to him at Tiflis, and up to this time I have given him all the information obtainable in this quarter. I have just received instructions from Mr. Ricketts to forward to your Lordship direct any future information on these subjects with which I may become acquainted, to save the loss of time occasioned in transmitting to Tiflis, and returning to Poti for, the mail via Odessa. Great preparations are now being made along the coast, and every effort made by the officers in command to complete the defences for the inspection of the Grand Duke Michael.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS GARDNER.

Doc. 492

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 20.)

(No. 15.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, January 5, 1877.

THERE was a meeting at the Russian Embassy to-day to consider the answer to be returned to the objections put in by the Turkish Plenipotentiaries at the last Conference to the proposals which had been submitted to them.

Believing that I possessed a greater knowledge than most of my colleagues of the character of the Turks and of their present disposition, I thought it right very freely to express my opinion that if we were still to hope to bring the labours of the Conference to a successful issue, we should not confine ourselves to an endeavour to refute the objections of the Porte, but that we must show a willingness so far to modify our proposals as to bring them back more strictly within what the Turkish Government will consider a fair interpretation of the bases upon which the Conference had been proposed to them.

It would, I thought be difficult to maintain that the proposed organization of the Provinces, the nomination of the Valis, and other officials, in the manner suggested, the deprivation of the Sultan of all authority over the movement of his troops, and the appointment of a Commission with such extended powers as those to be attributed to it,

would not seriously impair the independence of the Porte, which we had promised to respect, and render probable the rejection of such demands.

I was not criticizing the merits of the proposals themselves, but we must remember that the success of the Conference, of which we need not despair, depended upon their acceptance by the Turks, which I believe could only be obtained by sufficient modifications to bring them within what the Porte would regard as the limits of the programme.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Doc. 493 *Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 21.)*

(No. 17. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, January 8, 1877.

THIS morning I took to Midhat Pasha the inclosed paper which I had received from the Marquis of Salisbury, embodying the conditions upon which he is endeavouring to come to an understanding with the other Plenipotentiaries, and very urgently pressed his Highness to authorize its acceptance in Conference, pointing out how much was omitted of what he had regarded as unacceptable in the first proposals.

I have noted in the margin the substance of his remarks as we went through the paper together.

He did not give me the impression of intending to make any determined objection to the additional territory to be made over to the Prince of Montenegro, admitting what I said of the Porte, having no real interest in it, but denying that such an extensive cession could properly be demanded of the Porte on the basis of the *statu quo ante* in however general terms that expression was to be taken.

The only really important points upon which serious difficulty seems likely to be encountered are those relating to the Valis, to the International Commission, and to the formation of a militia.

He could not, he said, consent by any written official document to subordinate the authority of the Sovereign in the selection of the Governor in his dominions to the approval of Foreign Powers; but, at the same time, with the view of coming to an understanding with us, it might be possible to promise confidentially that the names of the proposed Valis should be unofficially communicated to us before their nomination.

I reminded his Highness that in the case of the Lebanon this engagement had been taken in a perfectly formal manner.

To the period of five years, for which it was proposed to fix the appointments of the Governors-General, he objected, as restricting the still more permanent character of the appointment of public functionaries established by the Constitution.

I said they would have no security of tenure under the clause of the Constitution authorizing the Government to dismiss them if they thought it indispensable.

He said that it was never intended that such dismissals should take place at the mere caprice of the Government, that in the regulations to be framed in reference to their appointments, care would be taken to provide against this by providing that their case should be formally inquired into; but it would be impossible to admit that no Governor should be recalled except upon a legal conviction.

Mere incompetence was not a crime, nor was bodily or mental illness, but these and other equally sufficient causes might make the removal of a Governor indispensable, which would be impossible if the proposals of the Plenipotentiaries were assented to.

I do not imagine that it will be difficult to agree upon an arrangement which shall guarantee the Governors against arbitrary removal during a fixed period, without the inconvenience of rendering it dependent upon a legal conviction.

I should have stated that the paper alluded to was communicated to Midhat Pasha as one to which it was hoped to obtain the general consent of the Plenipotentiaries, but not as being already agreed to by them.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

P.S. *January 9.*—I inclose a confidential report from Mr. Sandison of a conversation upon this subject with the Grand Vizier this afternoon.

H. E.

*Midhat Pasha's Observations.**Précis of Conditions.**Monténégro.*

Attaches no great importance to this, and thinks that though giving more than could be expected on the basis of the *status quo*, the discussion of this proposal should be reserved to the last.

Made no observation.

Ditto.

RECTIFICATION des frontières du Monténégro, avec annexion des Banyani, Piva, avec Niksich, Drobnjak, une partie de Charanzi, le district de Kolachine, les Kutchi Drekalovitchi, les Kutchi Kraïni, les Vassoïévitchi, de la Zievna au Lim, les Maly et Vely Brdo, Spouze, et Jabliak.

Commission Internationale de Délimitation *ad hoc*.

Liberté de navigation sur la Boyana.

Serbie.

Made much difficulty, insisting upon importance of Little Zvornik, but finished by admitting that the point might be referred to a Commission, as had at one time been contemplated by Aali Pasha.

Status quo ante bellum pour la Serbie avec règlement des difficultés de limites du côté de la Bosnie par une Commission Arbitrale, conformément au Hatti-Chérif de 1833.

Pour les Deux Principautés.

No difficulty made. Is ready at once to send back all Servian prisoners.

Evacuation par les troupes Ottomanes et par les troupes Principières du territoire en dehors des limites fixées, échange de prisonniers de guerre, et amnistie aux sujets employés au service ennemi.

Bosnie, Herzégovine, et Bulgarie.

Objected strongly to the five years' term as impairing the stability proposed to be given to Governors-General, but finally considered that it might be managed. No Protocol or written engagement would be signed allowing the Powers to control the the choice of Governors-General, but he would engage that they should be consulted.

No objections of any importance.

Les Gouverneurs-Généraux des provinces doivent être nommés pour cinq ans par la Porte, avec l'assentiment des Puissances.

Subdivision des provinces en sandjaks avec des Mutessarifés nommés par la Porte sur la proposition des Valis pour un terme fixe, et en cantons (nahiés, mudirliks), de 5,000 à 10,000 habitants, avec des autorités cantonales librement élus par la population dans chaque commune, et compétents pour toutes les questions touchant les intérêts du canton, et particulièrement la répartition et la perception des impôts.

No objections mentioned.

Assemblées Provinciales élues pour un terme de quatre ans par les Conseils Cantonaux. Ils établiront le Budget de la Province, répartiront les impôts, et nommeront les Conseils Administratifs Provinciaux, dont les Valis devront prendre l'avis dans les cas dépassant l'exécution pure et simple des dispositions légales et réglementaires, et sur lesquelles ils pourront entrer en communication avec la Sublime Porte.

Only exception made refers to fishing dues, which he says could scarcely be otherwise collected.

Yes, in districts which have suffered.
Will be taken into consideration.

Yes.

This was abolished by the law of the Tanzimat at the invitation of the Powers to restrain the irresponsible authority of the ecclesiastics, which gave rise to much abuse and oppression.

Yes.

Requires to be put into a practicable form.

Yes.

Gendarmerie, yes.

Militia, doubtful, rather no.

Yes, as regards introduction of Colonies, but not as preventing relations of those now here from joining them.

Will not sign engagement to that effect.

Yes.

No.

Amélioration de l'assiette des impôts; les Assemblées Provinciales et les Conseils Cantonaux auront la répartition et la perception des contributions, sauf les Douanes, postes et télégraphes, les taxes sur le tabac et spiritueux et la régie.

Abolition complète du fermage.

Remise des arriérés des impôts.

Fixation du budget des provinces chaque cinq ans sur la moyenne des revenus. Une partie sera affectée au paiement de la Dette Publique, et aux besoins du Gouvernement centrale, et le reste à ceux des provinces.

Réorganisation de la justice dans le sens d'une plus grande indépendance du Magistrat. Nomination des juges des Tribunaux Civils et Criminels par les Valis avec l'assentiment du Conseil Administratif, et des membres de la Cour d'Appel par la Porte sur la proposition des Valis. Publicité des séances et enquête judiciaire obligatoires. Juridiction exclusive des autorités ecclésiastiques pour les causes spéciales des différentes confessions.

Entière liberté de culte. Entretien du clergé et des établissements religieux et d'instruction publique par les communautés elles-mêmes. Garantie contre les conversions forcées.

Usage de la langue du pays dans les Tribunaux et l'Administration également avec le Turc.

Défense absolue des troupes irrégulières. Formation d'une milice et d'une gendarmerie de Chrétiens et de Musulmans, proportionnellement à la population, avec des officiers subalternes nommés par les Gouverneurs Généraux.

Interdiction de la colonisation des Circassiens. Amnistie générale.

Amélioration du sort des laboureurs et des fermiers en Bosnie et en Herzégovine. Distribution des terrains de l'Etat. Facilités pour le repatriement des émigrés.

Le système électif pour la Bosnie sera remplacé provisoirement par le contrôle de la Commission.

Mise en vigueur de ces dispositions dans un terme fixe de trois mois.

Commissions de Contrôle.

Cannot officially accept such a Commission, but one may perhaps be indirectly

Deux Commissions seront nommées par les Puissances Garantes pour contrôler

Midhat Pasha's Observations.

arrived at. The Porte might name a Commission, and the Embassies might send Agents, as was done in the case of Mr. Baring.

Not admitted. All acts of clemency must come from the Porte and the Sultan.

Precis of Conditions.

l'exécution des réformes proposées par les Puissances. Elles aideront les autorités Ottomanes à découvrir les auteurs des massacres et excès, assureront la punition des coupables, et prendront part à la révision des sentences des personnes condamnées par les Commissions Extraordinaires et les autorités administratives. Elles veilleront à la restitution des armes distribuées par l'Etat, jugeront s'il est nécessaire de prohiber le port des armes, et prendront des mesures effectives pour venir en aide à la population éprouvée et assurer la complète sécurité des habitants au moyen d'une gendarmerie spéciale organisée avec le concours d'officiers et de sous-officiers Européens. Les Commissions surveilleront en général l'exécution des règlements, le fonctionnement de l'administration et de la justice, et les élections.

Doc. 495

Inclosure in Doc. 493.

Mr. Sandison to Sir H. Elliot.

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Pera, January 9, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to report that, in the interview which I had with the Grand Vizier to-day, I found his Highness still very favourably impressed with all that your Excellency told him yesterday, in submitting confidentially for his consideration the modified proposals for the conclusion of peace.

In conformity with your instructions, I did not fail to impress his Highness with the importance you continued to attach to the acceptance of those proposals by the Porte, which, should they even be rejected by Russia, would still, I said, place Turkey in a favourable and advantageous position towards the other European Governments.

Bearing in mind your Excellency's idea that a friendly action brought to bear upon the Porte, independently of what takes place at the Conferences, might lead to important results, I felt no hesitation in telling the Grand Vizier that a great deal, if not everything, depended upon him, and that, such being the case, you fully relied upon his earnest exertions to bring the pending negotiations to a speedy and satisfactory solution, by adopting the proposals in question, which in reality had been considerably reduced in many important respects, as compared with those proposed by the Conference and rejected by the Turkish Plenipotentiaries as being inadmissible.

To use his own words, "the pill," which a few days ago he found "much too big, not only for his throat, but for his mouth," had now been reduced to reasonable proportions; and he ought, therefore, I ventured to add, hesitate no longer in accepting it as it stood.

His Highness stated, in reply, that his position had become a very difficult one indeed; and that, whilst he received messages from the Sultan that he must be mindful of his sovereign rights in connection with the concessions which are demanded, he could hardly venture, on the other hand, to go against the current of public opinion, which was clamouring out for war and other sacrifices, rather than submit to the humiliation and the future political dangers which would be in store for Turkey if she accepted the proposals of the Conference. I begged to remind his Highness that there was in reality no public opinion strong enough in the country which could deter a Grand Vizier, much less himself, from carrying out the policy he had determined upon, and that, under all circumstances, you would still look forward to his active support in favour of the proposals you advocated in the general interest.

Though his Highness said he could not well lose sight of the Treaty of Paris, of the Constitution, and of the English bases of peace, in discussing the proposals confidentially with Lord Salisbury and M. de Chaudordy, it is gratifying to say that he expressed great hopes and a sincere wish of coming to a satisfactory understanding with their Excel-

lencies. This, he continued, would then be a "fait accompli," of which he was prepared to assume the responsibility towards his colleagues and the country. As for the English bases, they were, he said, perfectly acceptable and that he should never feel any hesitation in adopting them fully.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. SANDISON.

Doc. 496 *Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 20.)*

(No. 19. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, January 11, 1877.

IN case your Lordship should deem it advisable to publish Mr. Baring's reports of the trial of the persons arraigned for participation in the massacres in Bulgaria, I would beg leave to suggest that those relating to the deliberations of the Commission upon the sentences to be passed should be considered as confidential, so far as the opinions of the individual members are concerned. The deliberations were held with closed doors, and their publication might injure some of the members of the Commission who took part in them.

Mr. Baring's despatches to which I more particularly allude at present, are dated the 26th and 29th of December, and were inclosed in my No. 2 and No. 10 of the 1st and 4th instant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Doc. 497 *Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 20.)*

(No. 23. Confidential)

My Lord,

Constantinople, January 11, 1877.

I TOOK advantage of the audience granted to me yesterday by the Sultan to deliver the Queen's letter, to impress earnestly on His Majesty the necessity of accepting without further delay the proposals unanimously submitted to the Porte by the European Powers.

I represented that, through the exertions of the Marquis of Salisbury, several of the points which His Majesty's Government had considered objectionable, had been so materially modified that there is no true friend of Turkey who would not now deplore it if she were to reject the proposals, and bring upon herself the consequences which must result from such an act.

The conversation turned almost entirely upon the proposed International Commission, respecting which the Sultan said that if it were only a question of having an English Commissioner, or even English and French Commissioners, he would not, for his part, hesitate for a moment to agree to it; but there were other Governments which he could not regard as being inspired by the same interest in his Empire as he knew to be felt by that of Her Majesty.

His Majesty asked me how it was proposed to constitute the Commission, wishing, I imagine, to be informed whether it was to be formed without any Turkish member being upon it, but I was not in a position to give him the information he wanted.

I left the Sultan with a decided impression that there will be no insuperable objection on his part to the appointment, for a limited period, of a Commission with an Ottoman Member upon it, provided it is not to be invested with powers incompatible with the independence of the Porte.

His Majesty, as well as the Turkish Plenipotentiaries, are still uninformed as to any change or modification having been made in the original proposals drawn up at the preliminary meetings of the foreign Representatives, and submitted to the acceptance of the Porte, and they have at present to be satisfied with being told that they are materially reduced.

They have learnt from their Representatives abroad, and from the public newspapers, that such is the case, but they have not yet been put in a position to discuss anything but the original project.

Although the Sultan shows much confidence in Her Majesty's Government, and a wish to be guided by their advice, it is to be remembered that he has yet assumed but

little authority over his Ministers, with whom the decision of the Porte will in reality rest; but we may, I think, calculate that any concessions consented to by them will at least meet with no opposition from the Sultan.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Doc. 498 Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 22.)

(No. 36. Secret.)

My Lord,

Berlin, January 16, 1877.

I HAD a long conversation with Prince Bismarck to-day, of which the following is a précis:—

His Highness said that the Conference was drawing to a close, and that he would be glad to know what Her Majesty's Government intended to do after it.

I said I did not know, but, judging from the present situation, I imagined that Her Majesty's Government would do nothing.

Prince Bismarck replied that, if he were consulted, his advice would certainly be to do nothing, because there was nothing to be done.

He never liked Conferences—he never expected any useful result from them; and as far as he was concerned, he never would go into Conference again.

I said I could not agree with him. The Conference was a necessary experiment, and it had produced useful though unexpected results. It had shown the strength of Turkey and the weakness of Russia, and had confirmed the European concert, so that we were better informed and better able to deal with the questions now than before the Conference; and, if war ensued between Turkey and Russia, it could be localised, which would be an advantage to the rest of Europe.

Prince Bismarck said he did not require a Conference to tell him all that, and he feared the future consequences of the Conference more than he regretted its present failure.

Turkey had displayed the spirit of two centuries ago, but had happily refrained from sending the Ambassadors to the Seven Towers, whilst the collapse of Russia would leave a sense of humiliation and bitterness among her populations that would drive them into future efforts to retrieve their military honour, when it might be difficult to localise a war into which Russia would seek to drag other nations.

I said that was a remote contingency; did he think Russia equal to a conflict with Turkey at present?

He replied that, judging from the anxiety displayed at St. Petersburg to avoid war, he must conclude that Prince Gortchakow either felt unprepared, or was reluctant to transfer the power at present in his own hands to those of the War Office or a Commander-in-Chief.

I said that the intimate relations existing between Russia and Germany must enable him to ascertain what was really intended.

Prince Bismarck said that since the commencement of the Conference he had not been consulted or informed by any Power except Austria. The Conferences had been managed by the Marquis of Salisbury, General Ignatiew, and Count Chaudordy. He did not complain of neglect since he had no interest in the matter, but he regretted to detect a tendency on the part of the French Government to set Russia against Germany. With what object he did not well know, but he hoped it was only to produce sufficient alarm "on 'Change" to facilitate the Duc Decazes' favourite pastime.

Now it was easy enough to establish a row between Russians and Germans, because individually there was no love lost between them.

He well knew that he was as much hated in Russia as Prince Gortchakow was laughed at in Germany.

On the other hand, the two Governments had been friends for more than a century, which proved that there must be real material advantages in an alliance that was certainly not based on either international love or respect.

It was the duty of a German Minister to prolong an understanding which secured the frontier of Germany against invasion from Memel to Ratibor.

Russia had rendered Germany services which she could not forget, and Russia should not be misled by France into thinking she could not rely on Germany any more.

He therefore wished to give Russia what moral support he could in her present humiliation, and the more so to disprove the calumnies of a hostile Press that accused him of wanting to weaken Russia still more by urging her on to war.

He had already rendered her a signal service by persuading Austria to desist from interference between Russia and Turkey, and he was glad to think that he had re-established a complete understanding between Austria and Russia for the present. But whether that understanding would be a lasting one or not he could not say, because a change of Ministry in Austria might undo all his work.

I asked what Austria had proposed to do?

He replied that Austria objected to a Russian occupation of Servia, as well as to a "localized war" between Russia and Turkey, but that he had proved to Count Karolyi that interference was more dangerous than strict neutrality in the present case.

On the other hand, he had persuaded Russia to give up the idea of an occupation of Servia, in deference to the objections of Austria.

As matters now stood, he believed Russia wished earnestly for peace, and would not attack Turkey; but if Turkey declared war, he thought Russia should be satisfied with one victory, and pay for it by relinquishing all idea of conquest.

That would be his advice to Russia, if consulted.

I said I thought he believed Russia to be unequal to a conflict with Turkey.

He replied that that was his impression for the present, but that Russia some months hence might be better prepared to resist an attack on the part of Turkey than now.

He hoped that Turkey left to herself would think better of it, and would not attack Russia, and that was the reason for which he held that the less done by the Powers after the Conference the better, so as to let Turkey reflect on her isolation.

I said it appeared to me that the understanding between Germany, Austria, and Russia was precarious, to say the least of it.

Prince Bismarck replied that it might appear so while they discussed their respective interests, and differed on certain points, but that their earnest desire to maintain the peace of Europe would always unite them to avert war.

I asked whether he had ever heard it reported that Count Andrassy sometimes boasted to his friends of "privately propping up the Turks?"

Prince Bismarck replied that he did not believe Count Andrassy had ever said so, and if he had, his object must have been to throw sand in somebody's eyes. Count Andrassy well knew that a change of Ministry in Austria would not be favourable to Hungary. He was a prudent Statesman, and also knew the value of an intimate understanding with Russia as well as he (Prince Bismarck) did himself.

On taking my leave the Chancellor begged I would consider what he had said as strictly private and confidential.

The upshot of his remarks I take to be that he is afraid of a Franco-Russian alliance, and means to prevent it by supporting Russia in the coming crisis by a somewhat more than benevolent neutrality.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 499

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 22, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

St. Petersburg, January 22, 1877, 4 P.M.

I SAW Prince Gortchakow this morning. His Highness considers the refusal of the Porte as an insult to Europe. He declined to say what course he would take, but he holds to the European concert, and considers that Europe should defend her honour by coercive measures.

He expressed satisfaction that the Plenipotentiaries had all signed the declaration, and that identic instructions had been given to the Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople.

His Highness in mentioning a report which had reached General Ignatiev that Turkey would treat directly with Russia, stated emphatically that Russia would not treat independently of Europe.

Doc. 500 Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 22, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

Rome, January 22, 1877.

THE Minister for Foreign Affairs has particularly requested me to telegraph as follows:—

"The Italian Government regret that the Plenipotentiaries of the Powers who had acted as mediators between Servia, Montenegro, and the Porte, should have separated without having made an effort, which would probably have been successful, to induce the Porte to convert armistice with those Principalities into an indefinite truce on the basis of the *statu quo ante bellum*."

Doc. 501 *Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received January 23.)

(Decypher.)

(No. 5.)

My Lord,

Tiflis, January 11, 1877.

THERE are eighteen guns in position at Poti, of these, four 15-ton guns are on island and at mouth of river, and four 20-ton guns near harbour. Total force at present at Tiflis and on frontier is, I believe, 75,000 infantry, 12,000 cavalry, and 25 to 30 batteries. The battery has but 150 men. At Alexandropol there are 28,000 infantry, 4,200 cavalry, and 15 batteries. At Erievan are 11,000 infantry, 1,800 cavalry, and probably 5 batteries, though none are reported. At Akalzek are 8,000 infantry, 1,200 cavalry, and 3 or more batteries. At Akhalkalaki are 6,000 infantry and 1,200 cavalry. Between Ozurget and Poti are 14,000 infantry, 2,300 cavalry, and 4 or more batteries. At Soukoum Kalé 2,400 infantry; and at Tiflis 6,400 infantry, 1,200 cavalry, and 8 or more batteries.

If 110,000 men are to be placed on frontier, there are 19,000 still required. Adding these to the 16,000 to be left in Daghestan, and deducting this from 50,000, the reinforcements said to be expected, there would remain but 15,000 over. If these be added to the 110,000, it would give a total of 125,000. Some allowance must be made for train and hospitals, hence total of combatant force under such conditions would be about 120,000 men.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. T. RICKETTS.

P.S.—Kurds, near Bashkale and Urmia, have gone to service of Turkey.

Doc. 502

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, January 23.)

(Télégraphique.)

Constantinople, le 20 Janvier, 1877.

DANS la séance d'aujourd'hui de la Conférence, j'ai exposé les motifs impérieux qui nous obligent de décliner les deux propositions relatives à l'institution d'une Commission Internationale et à la nomination des Valis avec l'agrément des Puissances.

A la Commission Internationale nous avons substitué, sur la base des propositions du Comte Andrassy, la formation de deux Commissions de Musulmans et de Chrétiens librement élus par la population, l'une pour la Bosnie et l'Herzégovine, et l'autre pour le Vilayet du Danube et d'Andrinople, et qui seraient investies des attributions les plus essentielles et les plus pratiques de celles que le projet accordait à la Commission Internationale. De plus, nous avons déclaré que le Gouvernement Impérial admettait dès à présent les points suivants du même projet :—

1. La division des vilayets en sandjaks.
2. L'élection des Assemblées des vilayets pour une durée de quatre ans.
3. La fixation du Budget des vilayets pour ces mêmes Assemblées.
4. L'indépendance des tribunaux.
5. La publicité des audiences.
6. La liberté entière des cultes.
7. La juridiction exclusive des autorités ecclésiastiques pour les causes spéciales des différentes confessions.
8. L'entretien du clergé et des établissements religieux, ainsi que des établissements d'instruction publique, par les communautés elles-mêmes.
9. Les garanties contre les conversions forcées.
10. La formation d'une Gendarmerie de Musulmans et de Chrétiens avec des officiers subalternes nommés par les Gouverneurs-Généraux.

Pour les autres points le dit projet permettrait :—

1. La sub-division des cazas en cantons de 5,000 à 10,000 habitants avec des autorités cantonales librement élues par la population dans chaque commune.
2. L'abolition des fermages.
3. Le non-emploi de levées irrégulières.
4. L'interdiction de la colonisation en masse des Circassiens en Roumélie.
5. L'amnistie générale et sans distinction.
6. La prohibition du port d'armes.

Nous avons déclaré que nous étions prêts à entrer en discussion, et que nous étions certains d'arriver à une entente. Nous avons, par conséquent, prié les Plénipotentiaires de procéder à la discussion sur chacun des points qui restaient à arrêter définitivement. Malgré cela, les Représentants des Puissances ont considéré la non-adhésion de la Sublime Porte comme constituant une divergence insurmontable, et ont annoncé la décision de clore la Conférence et de quitter Constantinople.

Nous nous sommes rendus à la Conférence animés du désir très-sincère de nous entendre avec les Puissances. Nous n'avons jamais cessé d'attacher une importance très-grande à leurs conseils et à leur bienveillance. Nous n'avons pas voulu, et nous ne voulons pas nous priver du concours bienveillant de l'Europe. Nous avons fait tout au monde pour ne pas arriver à ce résultat fâcheux. Mais, de l'autre côté, les vrais amis de l'Empire et toute la nation Ottomane nous aurait reproché justement, si nous acceptions ces propositions, comme n'ayant ni opinion ni souci de l'indépendance et des intérêts de notre pays. Il nous est impossible de croire que nos efforts pour défendre les droits de notre Souverain et la dignité de l'Empire soient de nature à nous priver de la sympathie de l'Europe.

Nous connaissons l'équité et la justice des Gouvernements. Ils voudront bien apprécier les raisons qui nous ont guidés dans ces négociations.

Veuillez donner lecture de cette dépêche à M. le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères.

Doc. 503 Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 1.)

(No. 37.)

My Lord,

St. Petersburg, January 26, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship an article from to-day's "Agence Russe," apparently of official inspiration, on the position assumed by the Porte towards Europe. This article denies the right of Turkey to independence of European control, but reserves the question of the policy to be adopted by Europe to enforce that control.

A *précis* of an article from the "Novaie Vremia" is also published by the "Agence Russe," to the effect that the Conference has benefited Russia by restoring to her the freedom of action which she lost at the Treaty of Paris.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Doc. 504

Inclosure in Doc. 503.

Extract from the "Agence Russe" of January 26, 1877.

LA SITUATION.—ON a vu par notre dernier télégramme que la Porte manifeste l'intention d'accomplir de son propre chef les mesures dont elle a refusé l'adoption à l'Europe. Elle prétend que, Puissance souveraine et indépendante, elle ne peut admettre une immixtion étrangère dans ses propres affaires intérieures sans se déconsidérer et perdre tout prestige vis-à-vis de ses sujets; tandis qu'il lui est loisible de prendre telles décisions qu'il lui convient dans la pleine liberté de son action.

En thèse général il n'est personne qui pourrait contredire à un semblable langage et à de pareils principes.

En fait et en droit en est-il de même en ce qui concerne la Turquie? En d'autres termes, ce langage, viendrait-il même à être suivi momentanément de faits, la situation créée aux Grandes Puissances par le refus de la Porte serait-elle changée? Toute la question du moment est-là,—

Pour y répondre d'une manière satisfaisante, il nous paraît indispensable d'envisager les trois faits suivants :—

1. La Turquie est-elle Puissance souveraine et indépendante au même titre et au même degré que les autres Etats ?

2. Les promesses de la Porte, sans autre garantie que sa parole, peuvent-elles aujourd'hui avoir légalement une valeur quelconque ?

3. L'intérêt qui a conseillé à l'Europe de combiner son action collective dans la Conférence de Constantinople, est-il par sa nature même susceptible d'être abandonné exclusivement à la liberté d'action de la Sublime Porte ?

En droit et en fait, il ne suffit pas pour qu'un Etat soit réellement souverain et indépendant à l'égal des autres Etats qu'il en ait les prérogatives, les attributs et les velléités ; il faut encore qu'il en ait le plein et entier exercice. Or, une Puissance qui, comme la Turquie, a besoin pour subsister politiquement d'avoir son existence garantie par les autres Puissances, et pour vivre matériellement d'être aidée par elles, ne se trouve pas précisément dans les conditions ordinaires d'un Etat réellement souverain et indépendant, alors surtout qu'elle a enfreint par la violation de ses engagements solennels les Traités qui, en retour de ces engagements, lui ont assuré ces garanties, et que les Puissances auxquelles elle oppose cette objection de souveraineté et d'indépendance sont précisément celles envers lesquelles elle s'est obligée.

Sur ce premier chef la Porte n'est donc pas recevable dans sa prétention.

Sur le second point il n'est point nécessaire d'insister. Après tous les Traités, toutes les Conventions, tous les Hatt et i Houmaïoun et i Shérif, solennellement signés, jurés, publiés, proclamés et demeurés lettre morte, une promesse de plus, fût-elle consignée dans la Constitution la plus Européenne et la mieux écrite, ne peut être désormais pour l'Europe d'aucune valeur réelle. L'expérience a prononcé et les faits lui ont donné force de chose jugée. Chacun sait aujourd'hui qu'entre le pouvoir qui ordonne et le fonctionnaire qui accomplit il y a en Turquie la distance qui sépare le ciel de la terre, avec cette différence pourtant que tandis que la terre subit toutes les influences du ciel, le fonctionnaire Turc, lui, n'accomplit scrupuleusement les instructions de l'autorité centrale que lorsqu'elles lui ordonnent de massacrer des populations ou de faire disparaître des témoins gênants. Légalement parlant et aux termes des lois, les promesses de la Porte sont aujourd'hui frappées de nullité.

Sous ce rapport encore, par conséquent, la prétention de la Porte n'est pas admissible.

Relativement au troisième point le doute est encore moins permis. Assurément ce qui a décidé en partie l'action commune des Puissances a été un sentiment d'humanité révolté, mais ce qui a donné à cette action et sa raison d'être et son importance, c'est l'intérêt supérieur et tout Européen qu'elles représentent légalement. Ce n'est pas pour la Turquie elle-même, qu'elles lui ont garanti son intégrité, et que plusieurs d'entre elles ont versé leur sang et leurs trésors, mais en vue de l'équilibre Européen. Aujourd'hui la Turquie peut-elle, a-t-elle le droit, en se prévalant de sa qualité d'Etat souverain et indépendant, de disposer d'elle-même et de son sort comme bon lui semble ? Non assurément ; car, en ce faisant, elle dispose d'un intérêt supérieur au sien propre, dont la garde et la surveillance appartiennent de fait et de droit à l'Europe, représentée par les Six Grandes Puissances Garantes.

Or, alors même que celles-ci le voudraient, elles ne pourraient, sous peine de forfaiture, de manquement à leurs devoirs les plus impérieux, les plus sacrés, laisser se perpétrer un précédent qui non seulement dégagerait la Porte de toutes ses obligations séculaires envers l'Europe, mais qui, de plus, établirait en principe la souveraineté et l'indépendance de la Turquie et par suite du monde Musulman, sur la souveraineté et l'indépendance des Six Grandes Puissances rémises et, par suite, sur toute la Chrétienté.

Nous réservons la question du prestige, de la dignité et de l'autorité Européenne qui appartient à un autre ordre d'idées, mais dont l'importance, au point de vue de l'avenir, n'est pas moins considérable.

Comme on voit, nous n'avons fait qu'effluer ces graves questions comme celles que comporte en ce moment la situation et qui doivent certainement préoccuper le plus les esprits sérieux aussi bien que les Cabinets.

Précis of Article from "Novaia Vremia."

Le "Nouveau Temps" accueille avec faveur un long travail où il est dit entre autres :—

"Nous ne devons pas oublier que la fameuse Conférence a été principalement imaginée et entreprise en vue de placer la Russie dans une situation fausse et de

l'humilier si possible. Faute de résultats bien marquants, qu'il était impossible d'espérer d'ailleurs en l'absence de toute sanction combinée d'avance, la Russie en aura du moins retiré cet avantage de se trouver complètement déliée vis-à-vis des Puissances.

"Si l'intervention tardive du Baron de Werther a eu pour effet d'arrêter la Conférence dans la voie des concessions excessives qu'elle semblait vouloir épuiser jusqu'au bout, la Conférence doit lui savoir gré d'avoir quelque peu ménagé sa dignité. La Russie, elle, peut s'avouer qu'elle n'a pas entravé les idées de conciliation. Elle serait donc,—nous semble-t-il,—autorisée à parler ainsi :—' Je ne veux pas faire la guerre de suite après la Conférence ; ce serait paraître vouloir venger l'honneur de l'Europe, dont elle seule est juge. Pour le moment il me suffit que la Turquie, objet pendant vingt ans des complaisances des Puissances, ait répondu à leurs bienfaits par l'outrage et se soit vue retirer la protection de l'Europe. Libre à cette dernière de faire ou de ne pas faire suivre ce châtiment d'un autre plus grave encore. Quant à mes intentions personnelles, je les réserve jusqu'au temps voulu, contente de me voir débarrassée du réseau d'intrigues et de mauvais vouloirs qui entravait ma liberté. Je ne renonce pas pour cela à ma mission de protéger les Chrétiens des Balkans. Ainsi, l'avortement de la Conférence aura rendu à la Russie son droit de libre arbitre. Droit d'autant plus précieux au moment où l'attitude des diverses Puissances, dégagée de certaines obscurités, permet d'apercevoir le but vers lequel tend chacune d'elles. Que cette position soit avantageuse au premier chef pour la Russie, on le voit rien qu'à l'effarement de la presse en Angleterre et en Allemagne, où les journaux se battent les flancs pour démontrer que l'insulte des Turcs n'atteint que la Russie. Au résumé et en réalité la Russie a obtenu pour elle de la Conférence plus qu'elle n'espérait, puisque celle-ci lui a délié les mains et rendu sa liberté d'action. Les Puissances, elles n'ont fait que se désister solennellement des prérogatives stipulées par le Traité de Paris conclu il y a vingt ans dans le but d'abaisser la Russie. . . .'"

Doc. 505 Mr. Jocelyn to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 1, at night.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, February 1, 1877, 11 P.M.

GRAND VIZIER showed me to-day reply from the Prince of Montenegro, which is satisfactory in tone, and expresses His Highness' desire to ascertain the Porte's bases for peace negotiations.

The Grand Vizier will answer by requesting His Highness to determine them himself.

I was informed confidentially that the Porte was ready to treat upon the *status quo ante*, and to offer a rectification of the frontier on the Sutorina side, according to the proposal of General Ignatiev to the Conference.

Any permission, however, given to the Montenegrins to use the pasture lands on the south must not be construed into cession of territory.

His Highness mentioned Constant Pasha as likely to be appointed to conduct negotiations.

Doc. 506

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha February 2.)

(Télégraphique.)

Constantinople, le 1 Février, 1877.

LA Sublime Porte déploie une grande activité dans l'application des réformes qui doivent faire passer dans la pratique les principes de la Constitution. Déjà plus d'une mesure a été prise en vue de cette œuvre de réorganisation. L'Herzégovine est de nouveau réunie au Vilayet de Bosnie, et Constant Pacha, Arménien, a été nommé Mustéchar du Gouverneur-Général de ce vilayet. En Roumélie le Gouvernement Impérial vient de former un nouveau vilayet, qui s'appellera du nom historique de Kossova, et qui comprendra Nich, Charokeui, Pizerend et Usouch.

Vassa Effendi, Grec, est nommé Mustéchar de ce vilayet. Ces décisions nouvelles répondent à des besoins administratifs et sont combinées de façon à assurer la bonne gestion des affaires de ces provinces. Savas Pacha, Grec, élevé au rang de Muchir, est

* Repeated to Embassies, except Paris.

nommé Gouverneur-Général des Iles de l'Archipel Ottoman. Des commissions instituées à la Sublime Porte élaborent activement des lois qui découlent de la Constitution. Enfin, nous travaillons sans relâche à l'établissement d'un système qui doit assurer dans un avenir très prochain le bien-être et la prospérité de tous les peuples de l'Empire.

Doc. 507

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 2.)

(Telegraphic.)

Bucharest, February 2, 1877, 3.35 P.M.

TWO English officers, arrived to-day from the head-quarters of the Grand Duke Nicholas, state that the Russian army is in excellent condition, and fit to march as soon as weather permits.

Doc. 508

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 2.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, February 2, 1877.

THE following telegram is from Mr. Monson:—

"The Prince received me this morning. I spoke to His Highness in the language of your Lordship's telegrams, and I urged upon him again the expediency of profiting by the present conjuncture.

"He said that he had telegraphed yesterday to the Porte that he would enter into direct negotiations, but that he was not sanguine as to the result. He had last night received a telegram from M. Ristich that the terms proposed to Servia were much too onerous, and he did not expect that the Porte would offer Montenegro what he could accept. He was in a condition to continue hostilities, thanks to Russian supplies and provisions; and he must frankly declare that the territorial alterations proposed by the Conference did not satisfy him, especially the omission of the seaport. He said, further, that his honour was engaged in the amelioration of the lot of the Christians in the Herzegovina. He, however, assured me that he would not lightly reject the proposals of the Porte, and that he would consult me upon them as soon as received; also that Russia had given him no official advice whatever.

"I think that he is rather puzzled at the attitude of Russia."

Doc. 509

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 4.)

(No. 84. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Vienna, January 30, 1877.

I LEARN from the Turkish Ambassador that he had an interview to-day with Count Andrassy, to communicate to him the proposals of the Porte to Servia, referred to in my despatch No. 79 of the 29th instant, and that his Excellency expressed great regret that Midhat Pasha should have attached to these proposals a question of guarantees, and urged the expediency of its being abandoned.

He pointed out at the same time that a peace with Servia was of the utmost importance, as showing that the Principality considered that the Slav cause had no prospect of success, at all events for the present, and that Servia, ceasing to be a belligerent, would therefore greatly facilitate the negotiations of the Porte with Montenegro.

The Turkish Ambassador, who has communicated this opinion to his Government, believes that the guarantees spoken of are not of a material character, and that they will probably be limited to the extension of the armistice, with a view to prevent the possibility of the negotiations being interrupted, as happened during the first armistice.

I endeavoured to impress on his Excellency the expediency of no time being lost in effecting the arrangements proposed by the Porte; and with reference to Mr. Gladstone's recent speech at Taunton, I pointed out to him the importance to Turkey of the re-establishment of peace being assured, and of reforms in the administration of the provinces being begun before Parliament meets on the 8th of February.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Doc. 510 Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 4.)

(Telegraphic.)

St. Petersburg, February 4, 1877, 4 P.M.

TEXT of Circular of Prince Gortchakow despatched on Friday to Russian Ambassadors at five Courts is published in to-day's journal. Following is general *précis*. Porte's refusal to accede to wishes of Great Powers creates a new phase of Eastern crisis. Russian Government has always considered and still considers it a European question. Concert of Powers initiated by Russia having failed, a new basis for negotiation was initiated by England, and a complete understanding among six Powers was obtained at Constantinople, but the results met with decided refusal of Porte. This refusal affects dignity and peace of Europe. The Emperor, desirous of acting as far as possible in common with Europe, wishes before taking a decision, to ascertain views of the other Great Powers as to meeting this refusal of the Porte, and ensuring execution of their wishes.

Doc. 511 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 4.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Confidential.)

Vienna, February 4, 1877, 6 P.M.

I AM told by the Minister for Foreign Affairs that he has received a telegram from Constantinople reporting that a party, of which the Sultan's brother-in-law is the leader, are intriguing to overthrow Midhat Pasha. His Excellency expressed much concern on the observation that if the Sultan is blind enough to dismiss a Minister who has just saved Turkey from a great danger and is striving to curb the evils which are ruining it, there is little hope for the Empire.

He seemed to think means should be adopted to thwart this Palace intrigue, but said that he did not see how to do it.

Doc. 512 Mr. Jocelyn to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 4, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Very Confidential.)

Pera, February 4, 1877, 11.30 P.M.

POSITION of Midhat Pasha is apparently becoming insecure.

Khedive's nephew, Halim Pasha, anxious to obtain the abrogation of the Firman, which deprives him of the succession, has joined with the Sultan's brother-in-law and some of the Palace functionaries in intrigues against his Highness.

The Sultan has lately shown decided disinclination to sanction concessions required by the Constitution.

Grand Vizier is, however, very determined, and does not as yet apprehend danger of dismissal.

Doc. 513 Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 5.)

(No. 14.)

(Decypher.)

My Lord,

Tiflis, January 21, 1877.

SINCE writing last despatch, I find that Prince Mirsky told Italian Consul that 57,000 reserve had in all from the commencement passed from European Russia to Caucasus. If, then, we take 51,000 as about the peace establishment of 6 divisions of infantry, 4 battalions of rifles, 3 battalions of sappers, and 36 foot batteries, and add 57,000, this would give 108,000 men. Now, 103 battalions would require 86,000, and 36 batteries at 300 each would require 10,800. This would make a total of 97,000. There would, therefore, remain 11,000 for train and pontoons for guns in position and for strengthening division in Daghistan. Adding also 12,800 cavalry, there would be a total of 120,800 men. Consequently, 114,000 could be placed on frontier, as I reported in my despatches Nos. 8 and 10.

The number of the reserve, as verified by me, was 40,000 only, but the others might have passed prior to my arrival; be this as it may, this information is useful, as, if true, it tends to show the maximum number of troops now in the Caucasus.

Sixty-eight guns are placed in position on right of frontier, namely, 8 at Nichaya, 38 near Kutais and Ozurget, and 22 at Poti (see former despatches). On the whole, as I reported in No. 10, I believe there will be a total of 132 battalions, but only 103 available for the offensive. Also a total of 142 squadrons, but only 116 available, and 42 batteries of foot artillery, and 7 horse artillery, but only 38 available for the offensive. Russian troops are very indifferent marksmen.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. T. RICKETTS.

Doc. 514 Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 5.)

(No. 15.)
(Decypher.)

My Lord,

Tiflis, January 22, 1877.

THERE was an error in my despatch No. 14. I find that the 57,000 men therein mentioned included the cavalry. We may, therefore, assume the information given in my despatch No. 13 is not far from the truth.

The 57,000 men will have been absorbed as follows: 42,000 required to bring 119 battalions from peace to a war strength; 9,000 cavalry arrived from European Russia, and 5,000 Indo-European for the artillery; making this latter 200 per battery, total force for offensive would seem: infantry 86,000, cavalry 12,800, and artillery 38 batteries, or 7,600; total 106,900 men. Twenty ammunition waggons gone to Akhalzik.

I learn from reliable authority that at this moment an attack is being made by Russia on Kyzil-Arvat, mentioned in my despatch No. 3. I will write more about this to-morrow. Four carts with telegraph apparatus just gone to Kutais.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. T. RICKETTS.

Doc. 515

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 5, 10.30 A.M.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.)

Rome, February 4, 1877, 11 P.M.

THE impression produced here by the Russian Circular, of which substance has been received to-day, is that Russia has succeeded in securing the concurrence of Austria in designs against Turkey.

Doc. 516

Mr. Jocelyn to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 5.)

(Telegraphic.)

Pera, February 5, 1877, 12.30 A.M.

PORTE will communicate by a circular to its Representatives the guarantees demanded of Servia.

Grand Vizier stated that assurances with regard to joint flags on fortresses applied only to the four mentioned in the Firman, and not to those actually existing.

On my observing that this seems to imply a demand for the destruction of the rest—a guarantee sure to be objected to—his Highness answered that this point was not to be pressed, but might be discussed in negotiation.

Doc. 517 Mr. Jocelyn to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 5, 5.6 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, February 5, 1877, 2.30 P.M.

MIDHAT PASHA has just been dismissed; will probably embark for Mitylene to-day. Nothing certain as to successor.

Possibly Savfet Pasha, with Edhem as Foreign Minister.

Further particulars later.

Doc. 518 Mr. Jocelyn to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 5.)

(Telegraphic.)

Pera, February 5, 1877, 6.30 P.M.

EDHEM PASHA has been appointed Grand Vizier; rest of the Ministry not yet certain.

I understand that the late Grand Vizier has been exiled, one of the Sultan's fast steamers having had orders to convey him to Brindisi.

Public tranquillity as yet undisturbed, owing to confidence in the new Grand Vizier, but considerable irritation exists against the *entourage* of the Sultan.

Doc. 519

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Jocelyn.

(No. 58.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 6, 1877.

THE Turkish Ambassador having called upon me on the 3rd instant, I took the opportunity of advising that the Porte should make peace with Servia on the basis simply of the *status quo ante*, without asking for guarantees, which, if of a stringent character, are almost certain to be refused, and if otherwise are not worth the risk of failure which the demand for them would involve.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 520 Mr. Jocelyn to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 6, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

Pera, February 6, 1877, 5 P.M.

PORTE, in replying yesterday to the Prince of Montenegro, proposed following bases for peace negotiations:—

Status quo ante;

Rectification of frontier;

Discussion of four proposals made by Prince Nicholas to the Porte last summer;

Mission of a Delegate to treat at Constantinople.

Doc. 521 Mr. Jocelyn to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 6, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

Pera, February 6, 1877, 5.30 P.M.

SAFVET PASHA told me to-day that the bases of negotiation with Servia, as communicated yesterday to Aleco Pasha, were:—

1. Engagement not to allow Revolutionary Committees.
2. Engagement to give Jews and Armenians equal civil and religious privileges with natives.
3. Not to increase number of fortresses.
4. To receive Porte's Agent at Belgrade.
5. To send a Delegate to Constantinople to treat.

He said that this last point, if agreed to, would probably bring about an understanding on all the rest, and he is most anxious that your Lordship should urge its concession at Belgrade.

Doc. 522 Mr. Jocelyn to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 6, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Most Confidential.)

Pera, February 6, 1877, 6.15 P.M.

SAFVET PASHA, in speaking to me to-day of the bad effect which might be produced in England by the recent dismissal of Midhat Pasha, expressed his extreme anxiety lest it should induce Her Majesty's Government to abandon the independent policy which, he had been assured, they now intended to pursue with regard to Turkey.

What he dreads is that Russia should succeed in forming a combination among the European Powers, alleging this change of Minister as a proof of hopeless weakness.

Doc. 523 Mr. Jocelyn to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 7, 4.20 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, February 7, 1877, noon.

BARING telegraphs that the Commission has acquitted Tossoun Bey in spite of conclusive evidence of his guilt, by a majority of four Mussulman to two Christian members.

I have consequently directed him to withdraw, and, as the important trials are now ended, to return here.

I have made strong representations to Porte on the subject.

Doc. 524 Mr. Jocelyn to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 7.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Secret and Confidential.)

Pera, February 7, 1877, 6.40 P.M.

THE Sultan sent for Safvet Pasha last night and stated to him the cause of the banishment of the late Grand Vizier, anxious that it should come to my knowledge for communication to your Lordship.

He said that for some time past Midhat Pasha had taken up a line calculated to encroach upon his Royal prerogative and to reduce him to a mere nonentity.

Such a result would have been fatal to the maintenance of law and order in this country, where hitherto the paramount authority of the Sovereign was the highest incentive to obedience.

Midhat had tolerated the freedom of the press to a degree insulting to His Majesty, and when remonstrated with had appealed to the Constitution as depriving him of all power to interfere.

His Majesty then stated that from documents in his possession he felt satisfied that Midhat Pasha had failed in his allegiance by aspiring to the dictatorship, and that his removal from the country became absolutely necessary.

Safvet Pasha distinctly confirmed this latter grave accusation to my informant as follows: "I conscientiously believe in Midhat Pasha's guilt."

Before taking leave of His Majesty Safvet Pasha received the assurance that he fully intended to carry out the Constitution, and that the Porte's foreign policy would remain unchanged, especially as regards the conclusion of peace so fervently desired by His Majesty.

Doc. 525 Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 7.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Belgrade, February 7, 1877, 9 P.M.

TURKISH Envoy saw Prince Milan this morning, and is satisfied with conciliatory manner in which his overtures have been received. The new Grand Vizier has confirmed his mission, but it will be most desirable that he should receive powers to conclude a definite arrangement before Servian Agent is sent to Constantinople, otherwise time spent in such a journey may imperil success by raising new difficulties.

Advantage might be taken of the presence of the Envoy at Belgrade.

Prince Milan, waiting for answer to his last communication to the Grand Vizier, possibly sees no objection to prolongation of the state of suspense, but surely it is the interest of the Porte to conclude peace promptly here.

I have delayed my departure hoping to assist in furthering so desirable a result.

Doc. 526

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, February 8.)

(Télégraphique.)

Constantinople, le 4 Février, 1877.

LES Puissances Garantes s'étant préoccupées de la nature et du caractère des garanties que nous demandons à la Servie comme complément nécessaire du *statu quo ante*, je vous prie de fournir au Ministre des Affaires Etrangères les informations suivantes destinées à les rassurer et à les édifier complètement. Fidèles à nos précédentes déclarations, d'après lesquelles nous nous en sommes rapportés aux Puissances quant à l'op-

* Repeated to Constantinople.

portunité d'admettre nos conditions primitives, nous n'exigeons pas aujourd'hui des garanties matérielles, mais seulement des garanties morales se résumant ainsi qu'il suit :—

1. Prévenir la formation sur le territoire Servien de bandes armées destinées à porter le trouble dans les Provinces voisines.

2. Prévenir également l'entrée dans les Provinces voisines des bandes formées soit par corps et ouvertement, soit clandestinement et par petits groupes.

Mettre obstacle à la formation en Servie de sociétés ayant un but révolutionnaire et, d'une manière générale, de toute société secrète, quel que soit son objet réel ou apparent.

Etablir à Belgrade un Agent Ottoman.

Indépendamment de la liberté religieuse, les Arméniens et les Israélites jouiront en Servie des mêmes droits et des mêmes privilèges que les autres habitants.

Nous désirons également que, conformément aux stipulations qui ont été faites lors du retrait de nos troupes de la citadelle de Belgrade, le pavillon Ottoman flotte désormais sur la dite citadelle à côté du pavillon Servien.

Enfin, il doit être entendu, en exécution des anciens Firmans, que le nombre des forteresses et l'importance des fortifications existantes ne doivent pas être augmentés par la suite.

Tel est le sens et tel est le but des propositions Vézirielles que nous désirons voir agréées par la Servie, afin de garantir moralement et autant que possible le maintien de la paix et de la sécurité des provinces voisines de la Servie.

Nous sommes convaincus que les Puissances Garantes voudront bien reconnaître l'utilité et l'extrême modération de nos demandes.

Il est bien entendu que les négociations de paix ne sont pas subordonnées à l'acceptation des points susmentionnés. Une fois le délégué Serbe arrivé ici, nous nous entendrons avec lui sur ces points.

Doc. 527

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, February 8.)

(Télégraphique.)

Constantinople, le 6 Février, 1877.

MIDHAT PACHA vient d'être relevé du poste de Grand Vézir et éloigné du territoire de l'Empire à cause de sa conduite de nature à ébranler la confiance et en vertu de l'Article 113 de la Constitution. Ce fait n'implique aucune modification dans la volonté souveraine de faire exécuter ponctuellement la Constitution, et aucun changement dans la politique du Gouvernement Impérial. Sa Majesté a prescrit de nouveau par son Hatt d'hier la rigoureuse et libérale application de toutes les réformes et le développement rapide et complet de tous les principes consacrés par la Constitution. En vous énonçant dans ce sens auprès de M. le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, vous vous attacherez à faire valoir auprès de son Excellence les considérations qui précèdent.

Doc. 528

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No 32. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, February 9, 1877.

THE Russian Ambassador called upon me this afternoon and expressed to me a strong personal opinion to the effect that no time should be lost in endeavouring to ascertain the views of Edhem Pasha on the subject of the reforms proposed by the Conference, which Count Schouvaloff thought it possible the Porte might now be willing to adopt, when it could do so without the appearance of acting under pressure. He believed that if it were in the power of Her Majesty's Government to induce the Porte to take this course, the danger of war would be greatly diminished.

I promised his Excellency that this suggestion should be considered.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 529 Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 10.)

(No. 19. Decypher.)

My Lord,

Tiflis, January 30, 1877.

GRAND DUKE goes to Poti to inspect works, and from thence to Kisheneff. I am told that twenty mortars and two 9-pound guns are placed on island of Bout near

Poti; this is flanked by a redoubt with four Krupp's 4-pound guns on head of land to south-west of lighthouse. Little to west of this latter is another battery with two Krupp's 9-pound guns and thirty mortars fronting anchorage in bay. A line of entrenchments for infantry lies to north-west of lighthouse near new harbour. Former report was from Vice Consul. This is from another source: I will try to verify it.

Fortifications at Poti are nearly finished; 150 torpedoes are placed from north to south between 28 feet water and 16 feet, about 5,000 yards from mouth of river. Numerous bridges have been made for passage of river between Poti and Orpiri, Ozurjet, Orpiri, and Kutais had been entrenched.

The following is the last information which I have received relative to the disposition of Russian forces at and near Alexandropol:—30,000 infantry, 4,200 cavalry, 16 batteries, and 500 militia; Erivan, 10,000 infantry, 3,800 cavalry, 4 batteries, Akhalkalaki; 6,000 infantry, 1,200 at and near Akhalzik; 20,000 infantry, 1,000 cavalry, and 5 batteries, Ozurjet; 800 infantry, 500 cavalry, 1 battery, and 2,000 militia at Orpiri; 400 gunners and 30 guns in position at and near Nicholaga; 3,360 infantry, 500 cavalry, Poti; 840 infantry, 30 cavalry, and 800 gunners, Kutais; 10,080 infantry, 4 batteries, and 4,000 militia, Tiflis, including 3 local battalions; 9,480 infantry, 300 cavalry, 5 batteries, and 1,000 militia, Soukoum Kalé; 2,500 infantry, 500 cavalry, 2 batteries, and 1,500 militia, Anapa and Novorosinsk; 2,500 infantry at Michaeloff; near Suram, 32 guns; total 95,720 infantry, 12,030 cavalry, 37 batteries, 1,200 gunners for works, and 9,000 Militia: the latter being of little account. It will be observed that a force is concentrating at Kutais and Akhalzik: this latter threatens Batum and Erzeroum. Some militia are being sent to Daghistan. Total force in that district from 16,000 to 18,000 men. Much snow fallen; roads bad; the marching of an army next to impossible.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. T. RICKETTS.

Doc. 530 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 12.)

(No. 125. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Vienna, February 8, 1877.

THE Russian Circular of the 31st ultimo was communicated to Count Andrassy two days ago.

On my asking his opinion of it yesterday, we said that its language is moderate, and rather encourages a hope that peace may be preserved than the reverse.

I have also been informed by Baron Orczy that Count Andrassy is of opinion that as it was written under other circumstances, and while Midhat Pasha was all-powerful at Constantinople, it is not improbable that it may be followed by another, expressing still more pacific views.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Doc. 531 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 12.)

(No. 126. Most Confidential.)

My Lord,

Vienna, February 8, 1877.

THE Turkish Ambassador informed me to-day that Count Andrassy has expressed to him in the strongest terms his concern and regret at what he considers the suicidal act by which the Sultan Hamid has deprived himself of the services of the only man who appeared to have the ability and energy required to save his Empire from the dangers with which it is surrounded, observations which, he said, were only addressed to him personally, as it seems vain to offer advice or counsel at Constantinople.

As Aleko Pasha said he had reported Count Andrassy's language to his Government, I remarked that if he had courage to tell them such truth he had better add that the Emperor, in expressing to me last night his surprise and regret at Midhat Pasha's exile, observed that it is now impossible to place any confidence in the Porte, as the Turks seem to be incurable ("sont incurables").

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Doc. 532 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 12.)

(No. 127. Most Confidential.)

My Lord,

Vienna, February 8, 1877.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 117 of the 5th instant, on the subject of the territorial concessions to be granted to Montenegro, there appears to be still great anxiety here, lest they shall be extended towards Sutorina and the sea.

The Turkish Ambassador called on me this morning to inform me that the Emperor, who had spoken to him in the most friendly manner during the diplomatic circle at the Palace last night, entered again into conversation with him at a later period of the evening, and said, with some excitement, that he had been surprised to learn that the Porte had decided to make concessions to Montenegro on its southern frontier, which could not be seen with indifference by the Austro-Hungarian Government.

Aleko Pasha said that Count Andrassy had already spoken to him in the same sense, and had even gone so far as to intimate that, though Austria had no objection to the districts in question being in Turkish hands, it would be extremely inconvenient to have Montenegrins for neighbours there, and if the Porte persisted in its alleged intention of ceding them to Prince Nicholas, it might be found necessary to protect Austrian interests at the expense of Turkey, against the inconveniences which would result from the contemplated changes.

I told Aleko Pasha that I had already assured Count Andrassy that the late Grand Vizier had not been prepared to make the concessions referred to, and that I would acquaint Baron Orczy in the course of the day with my having received telegrams from Cettigné and Constantinople, from which it appeared improbable that Edhem Pasha intended to go further than his predecessor to meet the wishes of Prince Nicholas.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Doc. 533 Mr. Strachey to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 12.)

(No. 6. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Dresden, February 8, 1877.

MURAD EFFENDI, the Turkish Consul-General here, an Austrian who has passed his life in the service of the Porte, and is well known in Germany as a dramatic and general author and publicist, was some time since placed in official connection with the Ottoman Embassy at Berlin.

Before Edhem Pasha's departure for Constantinople, Murad Effendi was in frequent personal communication with his Highness, who has since maintained an active correspondence with his subordinate.

Yesterday Murad read to me part of a letter from the new Grand Vizier, which he had just received.

Edhem Pasha wrote :—" Vous auriez déjà eu connaissance de la triste fin des Conférences. Nous nous sommes trouvés en face de dix diplomates qui déraisonnaient (*the ipsissima verba*)! On nous a demandé des concessions des plus irréconciliables avec l'indépendance et la dignité de l'Empire. Telles étaient les demandes de l'autonomie, des Valis, la délimitation des vilayets, &c. Nous n'avons pas pu céder, et vu que Sa Majesté—" Here Murad paused, passing to a more gossiping part of the letter, and remarking that the Sultan shared the views of his Ministers.

Murad informs me that Edhem has never dropped any hint of an approaching change. He thinks it likely that Midhat's fall may have been in part, or altogether, due to his rough character and temper, which might easily have brought him into conflict with the Sultan. On the other hand, his removal may have been meant as a concession to Russia.

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Doc. 534 Mr. Jocelyn to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 17, 5.30 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, February 17, 1877, 1.40 P.M.

GRAND VIZIER received last night from the Prince of Montenegro the assurance that he will at once send Delegates to treat at Constantinople. He looks upon this

concession of His Highness as a consequence of the representations of Her Majesty's Government, and desires me to convey his sincere thanks to your Lordship.

With regard to Servia, he told me very confidentially that, in event of the two points regarding Agent at Belgrade and the position of Jews being very strongly insisted on by the Servian Agent, Porte would be found ready to beat an honourable retreat.

Doc. 535

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Monson.

(No. 4.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 17, 1877.

HER Majesty's Government have learnt with satisfaction from your telegraphic reports of yesterday, that the Prince of Montenegro has consented to negotiate at Constantinople, and will send his delegates there at once. It is satisfactory also to learn that His Highness has been greatly influenced in taking this decision, by his desire to comply with the wishes of Her Majesty's Government, and you are authorized to state to him that Her Majesty's Charge d'Affaires at Constantinople has been instructed to use his good offices to promote an understanding between Montenegro and the Porte.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 536

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.

(No. 61. Most Confidential.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, February 17, 1877.

THE German Ambassador told me this afternoon that Prince Bismarck was of opinion that the time had not yet arrived to answer the Circular of Prince Gortchakow in regard to Turkey. Prince Bismarck had informed the Russian Government that this was his view, and the latter had apparently made no objection.

Count Münster added that he was allowed to tell me privately that the German Government would not take any part in a policy of coercion towards Turkey, and that they would be very reluctant even to join in fresh diplomatic action. This decision, however, Prince Bismarck did not intend to make public at present.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 537 Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 19.)

(No. 69. Confidential.)

My Lord,

St. Petersburg, February 13, 1877.

AT my interview with Prince Gortchakow on the 11th instant, his Highness, in reply to my inquiry, stated that he had not yet received any reply to his Circular despatch, nor did he appear to expect that an immediate answer would, or could, be given by the several Governments to whom it had been addressed.

His Highness appears to be waiting with much anxiety the result of the discussions in the British Parliament, and the issue of the peace negotiations between the Porte, Servia, and Montenegro, which, he considers, may exercise considerable influence on the decisions to be taken. For the moment, therefore, the position is one of "expectancy," in which the mutable state of affairs at Constantinople enters largely into account.

Prince Gortchakow is not a pessimist. He appears to be anxious for the maintenance of the European concert, and hopeful of its continuance, if the Powers should recognize in principle the obligations which he considers as resulting from the unanimity of their agreement in the Conference at Constantinople.

From casual observations which fell from his Highness I gathered that in recognizing the principle of those obligations he considered that the Powers might deliberate as to mode of giving effect to them without necessarily implying a recourse to armed coercive measures, the united will of Europe firmly expressed being, in his opinion, sufficient to exercise a moral influence and compulsion on the Porte. But if, on the other hand, the Powers should hold aloof and decline any further active participation, then the European

concert would be broken up and each Power would be free to act as its interests or necessities might dictate.

Prince Gortchakow spoke somewhat vaguely and discursively. I am, therefore, only able to report to your Lordship the general impression which his observations conveyed.

It appears to me that his Highness more particularly referred to England and to the course which may be taken by Her Majesty's Government. There is an evident wish on the part of Prince Gortchakow to avoid an isolated position for Russia and the necessity of a single-handed conflict with Turkey. He looks, therefore, to the maintenance of the European concert as the only means of extricating Russia from the advanced position in which the Imperial Government have placed themselves, and from which if they should not be relieved by the end of April, war must inevitably arise.

There is, moreover, a general belief here in the military and official circles (although it has not been even hinted at to me by Prince Gortchakow) that, should war take place between Russia and Turkey, it would be speedily followed by a renewal of the war between France and Germany, which would produce serious complications in Europe.

I cannot say how far these fears may be founded, but I have reason to believe that this possible contingency has not escaped the attention of the Emperor Alexander, who, in his desire for peace, so powerfully contributed two years ago to dispel the clouds of war which had gathered at Berlin.

It may therefore be easily presumed that the Emperor Alexander and his Government will use all their efforts to avert a single-handed conflict with Turkey from which they can derive no material advantage, and which will impose on Russia a sacrifice of men and money which she can ill afford.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Doc. 538 Mr. Jocelyn to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 19.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, February 19, 1877, 10.30 A.M.

IN reply to your Lordship's telegram of the 15th instant respecting Mr. Gladstone's motion in House of Commons, it will be some days before any detailed report can be furnished respecting sentences passed on Bulgarians. 25 were executed, 2 sentenced to death but not executed, and 60 sentenced to hard labour by special Commission presided over by Salim Effendi, at Philippopoli; 22 were sentenced to death and 20 condemned to hard labour by Ali Shefik Bey's special Commission at Tirnova, and 2 were executed at Gabrova by order of Fasli Pasha. As regards the persons tried by Sadoullah Bey's Commission for having been implicated in outrages, Achmet Agha, of Dospat, was condemned to death, December 25; Achmet Tchaousch, of Kara Boulak, to hard labour for life, January 3; Kutchuk Khalil to 6 months' imprisonment for robbery, January 5; Alish Pehlivan to 4 years' hard labour, January 10; Achmet Tchaousch, of Dorkovo, to 3 months' imprisonment for theft, January 11; Metto Bektach to death, and Fethe, of Firgovo, to 8 years' hard labour, January 27: all these were implicated in Batak affair, and the sentences have still to receive the ratification of the Porte. Abdullah, the Kiatib of Dervent, was sentenced to 3½ years' hard labour for robbery on November 30; Tossoun Bey was acquitted February 6.

Doc. 539 Mr. Jocelyn to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 19, 4.30 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Very Confidential.)

Constantinople, February 19, 1877, 2 P.M.

I SAW M. Christies this morning. He is sanguine of being able to come to an agreement.

He stated that question of position of Jews in Servia was practically settled; Porte having agreed that it should form subject of legislation.

He said that his Government, although willing if necessary to accede to mission of Turkish Agent, was especially anxious that this concession should not be recorded in the instrument drawn up at the conclusion of peace. He will sound Porte as to its intentions regarding Commission for the Drina frontier.

Would your Lordship authorize me to speak to Grand Vizier in support of it, as M. Christies is unwilling that the suggestion should appear to have come from him?

Doc. 540

(No. 45.)

My Lord,

*The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.**Foreign Office, February 19, 1877.*

THE Russian Ambassador called upon me and repeated to me the substance of the communications which had lately reached him from Prince Gortchakow, which were to the following effect:—

In the midst of all the changes at Constantinople, Prince Gortchakow says the Emperor of Russia continues to pursue the same object, though the means by which it is sought to attain it may vary according to circumstances.

The object in question is that which all Europe has in view—the conclusion of peace between Turkey, Servia, and Montenegro, and the improvement of the condition of the Christian populations of Turkey on the bases already indicated by the Powers. The Emperor has always declared that his endeavours for this solution were made in concert with other Powers, and that unless this concert failed him he would not take isolated action.

In Prince Gortchakow's opinion a great danger will be averted if peace is concluded between Turkey and the Principalities. If further Edhem Pasha executes measures of real improvement in the position of the Christian subjects of Turkey, His Highness has no doubt the Emperor would take this result into consideration; but for this purpose it is necessary that there should be action, a beginning of something done, and not words only.

It remains then to be seen, Prince Gortchakow continues, whether the ulterior action of Russia is to be collective or isolated.

The Cabinets of Europe must decide that question. If the Governments of the other Powers answer that the Conference having failed, they will in future pursue a policy of abstention, that will be taken by the Russian Government as an indication that Russia must act for herself.

If the Powers, on the other hand, reply that they still maintain their requirements as to the improvement of the condition of the Christian population of Turkey, and that the unanimous wish of Europe in this respect must be (“doit être”) respected by Turkey, that principle having once been laid down, namely, that Europe does not abandon the future of the populations in question, nothing prevents the continuance of Russia in the prosecution of this object by collective action.

On making this communication to me, Count Schouvaloff repeated to me again an assurance of the sincere desire of the Emperor Alexander to arrive at a pacific solution.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 541

(No. 115.)

My Lord,

*Mr. Jocelyn to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 20.)**Constantinople, February 9, 1877.*

THE misfortune which has lately befallen the Turkish Empire by the disgrace and fall of Midhat Pasha will not have been altogether unexpected by your Lordship; Sir Henry Elliot having already reported the existence of intrigues against him which were likely to prove successful.

The late Grand Vizier had long been acknowledged as the leader of the advanced liberal party—the so-called “Jeune Turquie,” consisting to some extent of men, who for the furtherance of their own ends, rather than in their country's interest, were prepared to go to almost any length in support of a policy calculated to diminish the absolute power of the Sultan.

Hitherto their chief had been able to keep their dangerous aspirations within bounds, so as to avoid exciting the susceptibilities of the Palace, but during the last few weeks there had been evidence of increasing independence and even arrogance of demeanour on their part, as well as of a relaxation of the control formerly exercised over them by Midhat Pasha.

Zia Pasha, one of the foremost in the movement, and, at present, Governor-General of Syria, had, on a recent occasion, not hesitated to declare that the Sultan was the mere servant of the people, and had denounced as contrary to the principles of political liberty, the idea that the will of one individual should bear down that of a whole nation.

This incident, an account of which I have the honour to enclose, will serve to illustrate the indiscretions not unfrequently committed by members of the National

party, whose offensive expressions were, as may be supposed, not long in reaching the ears of the Sultan.

The absolute removal of the censorship of the press in political matters had been a favourite measure with the late Minister, but in adopting it he had neglected to ensure a corresponding observance of the respect due to his Sovereign by those who were responsible for the statements of its organs.

In one instance not long ago an influential local journal, the "Vakit," went so far as to assert that a mere decree of the Shcik ul Islam was in itself sufficient to depose the Sultan; an expression which appears to have aroused His Majesty's grave displeasure.

The Grand Vizier, however, to whom He complained of the objectionable phrase, took no further notice of the Imperial commands, beyond bidding the editor go and arrange the matter himself with the Palace.

Such incidents had tended to produce a feeling of suspicion and dread of His Vizier in the Sultan's mind, and the persons in His Majesty's immediate vicinity, who were ever on the watch for a false move on the part of a Minister whose measures were thwarting their own views, were not slow in availing themselves of the opportunity now offered of compassing his overthrow.

On the morning of the 5th instant, his Highness, who appears to have been almost unaware of his danger, was summoned to the Palace, where he was at once deprived of the seals of office, and, without any communication with the Sultan, forthwith conducted on board one of the Imperial despatch vessels, which lay ready to convey him out of the country.

Having been allowed to choose his destination, he is said to have selected Brindisi, whence, I understand, he intends proceeding to England.

The fall of such a man at so critical a period in his country's history was likely to be followed by the gravest consequences.

The action of his party seems, however, to have been paralysed by the sudden resolution which the Sultan had displayed, and when, a few days later, the Imperial Rescript announced the firm determination of the Government to stand by all Midhat's reforms, and to carry out the Constitution of which he was the author, while the Sultan's authority was maintained, it became evident that no immediate danger was to be apprehended from the change.

Demonstrations in Midhat Pasha's favour, and demands for his public trial were spoken of as likely to be made; but day after day passed, and the tranquillity which has now become so characteristic an accompaniment of political changes in Turkey, remained undisturbed.

The press had, naturally, received orders to support the Government in this matter, as will be apparent from the inclosed extract from one of the popular journals; while the zeal of the national party is now displayed almost as much against its fallen chief as it formerly was in his favour.

I have been informed, however, that a few of the leading spirits of the party have abstained from this course, and are maintaining an attitude of reserve until the policy of the present Government has developed itself.

I have, &c.
(Signed) NASSAU JOCELYN.

Doc. 542

Inclosure in Doc. 541.

Newspaper Extract.

D'APRES les dernières nouvelles de Smyrne, Zia Pacha, Gouverneur Général de Syrie, continue à séjourner à Smyrne. Son Excellence est l'hôte d'un notable Musulman de cette ville. C'est là qu'elle reçoit une série de visites et c'est là qu'elle déploie, aux yeux des personnes qui ne la connaissent pas, ce zèle et cet amour pour le bien public qui lui ont valu plus d'une condamnation à l'exil. A une personne qui lui parlait de la Constitution, Zia Pacha a dit nettement: "C'est votre seule planche de salut. Le jour où vous la foulerez aux pieds ou vous ne vous en servirez pas comme on doit s'en servir, ou vous n'en tirerez pas ce que vous devez en tirer, ce jour-là vous prononcerez la condamnation de votre pays et vous le livrez à l'étranger." A une autre, qui émettait, en tremblant, l'idée que le Sultan est toujours le Padischah, pouvant détruire d'un mot ou d'un geste, tout ce que la nation, ou lui-même, avait édifié: "Le Sultan," répliqua l'ancien chef de la

Jeune Turquie, "est notre serviteur à tous et rien de plus. Lui-même, au surplus, l'a déclaré, ce qui sera son éternel honneur, et c'est faire œuvre de peuple esclave que de croire que la volonté d'un seul peut détruire la volonté de tous."

Doc. 543

Inclosure in Doc. 541.

Newspaper Extracts.

"Phare du Bosphore."

UN journal de la localité, dont le programme consiste à donner des coups d'encensoir aux puissants du jour, quitté à convertir son encensoir en fouet et à les fustiger impitoyablement aussitôt qu'ils cessent de l'être, cherche à nous attirer dans une polémique sur un terrain excessivement glissant.

Les écrits de ce journal ne pouvant exercer aucune influence sur l'esprit du public, nous ne répondrons pas à ses insinuations malveillantes et nous nous bornerons à enregistrer que, pour la centième fois, il a flairé en bon courtisan le coup le balai et s'est mis lestement du côté du manche.

"Courrier d'Orient."

Nous avons raison de dire que quarante-huit heures suffiraient pour consoler la "Turquie" de la chute de Midhat Pacha. Non seulement elle est consolée, mais elle traîne pour ainsi dire aux gémonies celui qu'elle encensait quelques jours auparavant. Après lui avoir prodigué le nom de nom de "conseiller éclairé," "d'ardent patriote," après lui avoir attribué des paroles d'une "éloquence souveraine" et avoir dit qu'il pouvait "être fier du triomphe qu'il a remporté," la "Turquie" le dépouille des fleurs dont elle l'avait orné. Elle déclare que "c'est à tort que l'on attribue exclusivement à Midhat Pacha le mérite de la réforme constitutionnelle. Tous ceux qui savent ce qui s'est passé depuis le grand acte de la promulgation de la Charte Constitutionnelle avaient pu prévoir l'événement actuel. Le changement du Grand Vézir était donc une mesure dont l'ajournement eût été un malheur public, &c."

La "Turquie" était sans doute au nombre des esprits pénétrants qui "avaient pu prévoir l'événement actuel." Alors pourquoi encensait elle le futur coupable? C'est qu'il était en place. Vivent les hommes élevés en dignité! Haro, sur les hommes tombés!

Nous ne serons pas accusé de partialité en faveur de Midhat Pacha, sur le compte duquel nous ne nous sommes jamais fait illusion après son premier Grand Viziriat; depuis qu'il a été mis pour la seconde fois à la tête des affaires, on ne trouvera pas dans le "Courrier d'Orient" un mot à sa louange. Mais on ne peut s'empêcher de parler quand on voit louer et blâmer le même homme du soir au lendemain.

La "Turquie" excuse très maladroitement l'exil de Midhat Pacha. Voici ses paroles: "Mais, dira-t-on, si le Sultan et ses conseillers ont eu raison dans le fond, ils ont eu tort dans la forme. Le Grand Vézir déchu (en Français on écrit 'Vizir' ou 'Visir') ne devait pas être éloigné du territoire et privé, sans jugement, du droit de vivre dans son pays."

La "Turquie" a tort de parler de mise en jugement. L'ex-Grand Vézir ne pouvait être jugé. Midhat Pacha s'était fait une belle part dans la Constitution; il s'était rendu inviolable. En effet, en vertu de l'Article 31 de la nouvelle Charte, on peut traduire un Ministre devant la Haute Court, mais le Grand Vézir reste au-dessus de la loi.

La "Turquie" dit que le Sultan a fait usage contre Midhat Pacha de "l'une de ses prérogatives souveraines consacrées par la Constitution."

Cette prérogative est inscrite dans l'Article 113, dont le dernier alinéa dit: "A Sa Majesté le Sultan appartient le pouvoir exclusif d'expulser du territoire de l'Empire . . . ceux qui sont reconnus comme portant atteinte à la sûreté de l'Etat."

Mais l'Article 113 concerne l'état de siège, et bien des gens soutiennent que sans l'état de siège l'expulsion ne peut légalement avoir lieu.

Une pareille objection peut être réfutée sans entrer en discussion sur l'interprétation de l'Article dont il s'agit. Admettons qu'elle soit fondée.

Mais alors en vertu de quelle loi jugera-t-on un Grand Vézir? Il n'y en a pas. Reste la volonté du Souverain qui, en certains cas, d'après les institutions Islamites, est une loi vivante: *viva ac spirans lex*.

L'expulsion de Midhat Pacha est donc parfaitement correcte.

Doc. 544 Mr. Jocelyn to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 20.)

(No. 119.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, February 11, 1877.

THE Grand Vizier told me yesterday that he had received a very favourable report from his Agent at Belgrade as to the conciliatory disposition displayed by Prince Milan.

Judging from Pertew Effendi's statement, his Highness thought that the Servian Government would eventually accept the guarantees demanded by the Porte, and would consequently be disposed to send a delegate to Constantinople to treat for peace, which, he said, might be concluded three or four days after his arrival.

He, therefore, saw no necessity for extending to Pertew Effendi powers beyond those which he already possessed.

With regard to Montenegro, things, he feared, were not so satisfactory.

Prince Nicholas appeared less disposed to send a delegate here to treat, and Edhem Pasha did not conceal his conviction that the success of any negotiations carried on at Vienna would be endangered by the pernicious influence likely to be brought against them through the Slav agencies at work in that capital.

Besides if, as seemed probable, the Prince considered it beneath his dignity to treat at Constantinople, the Porte might, on the same ground, refuse to do so at Vienna.

I asked his Highness what were his intentions as to the cession of territory to be made to Montenegro, and he replied that on the southern or Albanian frontier no modification could take place, as a contrary course would be fatal to the maintenance of the Porte's authority among the Mirdites and other mountain tribes in that direction.

Along the northern boundary he would be willing to agree to a rectification, but to what extent he was not yet prepared to say.

I have, &c.

(Signed) NASSAU JOCELYN.

Doc. 545 Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 23.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Very Confidential.)

St. Petersburg, February 22, 1877, 10 P.M.

I AM privately informed that certain bankers at Amsterdam, through a Prussian Agent, have offered to the Russian Government a loan of 500,000,000 roubles in gold on very advantageous terms.

This offer has been declined, and the refusal is interpreted as an indication of peace.

I also learn that a Council of Ministers is to be held on Saturday, under the presidency of the Emperor, when decision as to peace or war will be taken; if the former, which is confidently expected, the demobilization of the army will be ordered immediately.

It is reported that Prince Gortchakow will retire, and be succeeded by Count Adlerberg, Minister of the Imperial household, if not immediately, at no distant date.

Emperor, I am told, will not withdraw from European concert.

Doc. 546

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Jocelyn.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, February 23, 1877, 6.45 P.M.

YOU should communicate the substance of Mr. Green's telegram* repeated to you this morning to the Turkish Government, and press strongly upon them the expediency of avoiding any steps that may be likely to lead to a renewal of bloodshed in any part of European Turkey.

The moment is most critical. We have reason to believe that the Russian Government are considering their course, and that it is not impossible that their decision may be in favour of peace. But a prudent and conciliatory attitude on the part of the Porte, and an encouragement to hope for real progress and reform, is absolutely necessary to enable the Emperor to satisfy Russian public opinion. An error or even a mishap in the conduct of the Turkish authorities towards the population may produce results which will be irrevocable.

The information I give you as to the Russian Government is secret, but you may mention it privately to the Grand Vizier and Foreign Minister.

Doc. 547 Mr. Jocelyn to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 23.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, February 22, 1877, 12.5 P.M.

THE principal points of divergence of opinion between Servian Envoy and Porte as brought out at yesterday's sitting are the following :—

Servia insists upon a Protocol recording peace, whilst Porte demands a note. This point has been referred to Belgrade, and if not conceded, will cause much difficulty.

Residence of Ottoman Agent at Belgrade, although granted by Servia, must not be recorded in Protocol. This the Porte may perhaps agree to, but is still holding out.

Servia also objects to amnesty to refugees being recorded in the Protocol.

Porte insists strongly upon this being done.

The Drina frontier question is as yet untouched. Porte offers a Commission to make arrangements with regard to the islands, but no territorial rectification has been discussed.

Considering her vanquished condition, Servian pretensions appear to me still high, but I think that I can perceive that M. Christics is holding much ground that he will eventually yield.

Doc. 548 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 26.)

(No. 182. Very Confidential.)

My Lord,

Vienna, February 23, 1877.

THE newspapers having lately reported that the Turkish military authorities in the Herzegovina are building block-houses on the Dalmatian frontier, I asked Baron Orczy whether the statement was correct; but his Excellency seemed to have no information on the subject.

I learn, however, from the Turkish Ambassador that Count Andrassy has spoken to him of the report, observing that he had no objection to measures being taken for the defence of the frontier, but that he must insist upon the Porte carrying into immediate effect the reforms which they had agreed to in their answer to his note of December, 1875.

His Excellency appears, at the same time, to have remonstrated against the alleged intention of the Porte to publish a Yellow Book of Diplomatic Correspondence, declaring that, if his advice to the Turkish Government is to be made public, he will cease to have any confidential communications with them in future.

On Aleko Pasha asking his Excellency's opinion as to the probability of war, he said he considered it less certain than it had been some weeks ago, and that he hoped, if it could not be prevented altogether, that it would, at all events, be limited to Asia.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Doc. 549 Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 26.)

(No. 75. Secret.)

My Lord,

Berlin, February 24, 1877.

THE friends of peace believe that the coming Turco-Russian war might be averted if the Powers built Russia a golden bridge to help her out of her present dilemma, that the Powers are waiting to follow the lead of England in answering the Russian Circular, and that England is waiting to see what Turkey will do before answering it, so that Russia, unanswered and isolated, and, therefore, unable to demobilize without even the semblance of a national satisfaction to uphold her honour, will be compelled to go to war, however much she would prefer peace.

A person in a high position, and in the enjoyment of intimate relations with the Russian Court, but who, for obvious reasons, does not wish to be named, tells me, in the strictest confidence, that in the opinion of the Czar and Prince Gortchakow the foundations of the golden bridge might be laid as follows :—

“ Le seul moyen d'assurer la paix générale et d'arriver à une solution immédiate des difficultés serait de prévenir l'action isolée de la Russie.

“ Pour atteindre ce but il faut :—

“ 1. Que l'accord Européen soit maintenu.

"2. Que cet accord garantisse l'amélioration du sort des Chrétiens, afin que la Russie puisse justifier la démobilisation de son armée.

"Il est donc à désirer que la réponse à la Circulaire contienne les déclarations suivantes :—

"1. Maintien par les Puissances de leur exigence unanime en faveur de l'amélioration réelle du sort des populations Chrétiennes.

"2. Proposition d'accorder à la Turquie le terme d'un an pour assurer l'exécution des réformes nécessaires.

"3. S'il était constaté à l'expiration de ce terme que la Porte n'a pas tenu ses engagements, l'Europe imposerait des garanties d'exécution qui serait à préciser en temps et lieu."

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 550 Mr. Jocelyn to the Earl of Derby.—(Received March 8, 5 P.M.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, March 8, 1877, 2.15 P.M.

GRAND VIZIER has asked me to communicate the following reforms to your Lordship as being enactment (?) of the Parliament, and at present in the course of execution :—

Reorganization of police under Colonel Baker, as reported in my despatch No. 160 of 2nd instant.

Subdivision of the cazas into nahiés.

Admission of Christians into police.

Admission of Christians into military and administrative colleges.

Prohibition of Circassian colonies in Roumelia.

Non-employment of Bashi-Bazouks.

Remission of taxes in ravaged districts.

Waste lands have already been, and are being given, in Bosnia and Herzegovina to labouring classes.

Facilities of purchase of land accorded to Christians.

Freedom of worship to all denominations ; in short, all the proposals of Andrassy note are accepted, and will be executed.

Doc. 551 Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received March 8.)*

(Telegraphic.)

St. Petersburg, March 8, 1877, 6 P.M.

PRINCE GORTCHAKOW cautioned me to-day against believing and reporting the false rumours current here of peace at all price. His Highness said that Russia was most anxious for a pacific solution, but some guarantee was required for an amelioration of the condition of the Christians in Turkey. With a view to obtain this end His Highness stated that a proposal would be submitted to Her Majesty's Government, not as an ultimatum, but open to modifications.

Prince Bismarck, he said, had expressed his entire concurrence in this proposal.

Russian Ambassador in London was to meet General Ignatiev to-day at Paris.

Doc. 552 Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received March 12.)

(No. 88. Secret.)

My Lord,

Berlin, March 8, 1877.

I HAVE just returned from a reception and concert at Court, and have been struck at finding how much anxiety prevails respecting the success of General Ignatiev's mission.

The Emperor himself told me that, in his opinion, the maintenance of peace between Turkey and Russia depended solely on the attitude of England, and he most sincerely hoped that Her Majesty's Government would be able to prevent war by supporting Russia.

The German Ministers and Prussian Generals present at Court spoke to me in the same sense.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 553 Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received March 12.)

(No. 92. Secret.)

My Lord,

Berlin, March 9, 1877.

IN the course of conversation the other day Prince Bismarck said that he wished to express his sincere thanks to your Lordship for the discretion with which he had been treated in the English Blue Books.

He had rather dreaded the publication of the correspondence on Eastern affairs, and had since read it with a sense of grateful relief.

He supposed that the British public scarcely realized how embarrassing the disclosures in the Blue Books were, and how distasteful, in consequence, they were to Statesmen abroad.

The dread of compromising one's friends and allies by indulging in an intimate exchange of ideas, which was liable to publication, stood in the way of international policy, whilst the publication of such intimate conversations led to personal estrangement and distrust, which reacted in an injurious manner on public affairs.

Some years ago one of his predecessors in office had fallen a victim to the indiscretion of Blue Books, whilst the relations of Count Andrassy with the Russian Government had now been seriously injured by the publication of his "confidences" to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Vienna, a most regrettable occurrence at the present juncture.

At a Court concert last night Her Majesty the Empress spoke to me in the same sense, and said that the Emperor had highly appreciated the reserve so tactfully observed by Her Majesty's Government in regard to Germany in our recent Blue Books on Eastern affairs.

Similar observations were made to me by several members of the German Government in the course of the last few days.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 554

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 68. Most Confidential.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, March 13, 1877.

THE Russian Ambassador, when handing to me the draft Protocol inclosed in my despatch No. 67 of this day's date, accompanied it by a statement of the views and wishes of his Government to the following effect:—

The object of General Ignatiev's journey, Count Schouvaloff stated, had been to furnish explanations as to the real views of the Cabinet of St. Petersburg, and to facilitate a pacific solution.

After the sacrifices which Russia had imposed upon herself, the stagnation of her industry and of her commerce, and the enormous expenditure incurred by the mobilisation of 500,000 men, she could not retire nor send back her troops without having obtained some tangible result as regards the improvement of the condition of the Christian populations of Turkey. The Emperor was sincerely desirous of peace, but not of peace at any price.

The Governments of the other Powers were at this moment preparing their answers to the Russian Circular. The Russian Government would not express any opinion by anticipation on these replies, but they foresaw in them the possibility of a great danger. For if the replies were not identical, what would be the position of the Imperial Cabinet?

The agreement of the Powers, so fortunately established at the Conference, might be broken up in consequence of the shades of opinion manifested in the replies of the several Cabinets, and further, if one of the Powers should propose to Russia to resume her liberty of action, would not that be a determining cause to induce her to seek for

a solution, either by means of a direct understanding with the Porte, or by force of arms?

Under these circumstances it appears to the Russian Government that the most practical solution, and the one best fitted to secure the maintenance of general peace, would be the signature by the Powers of a Protocol which should, so to speak, terminate the incident.

This Protocol might be signed in London by the Representatives of the Great Powers, and under the direct inspiration of the Cabinet of St. James.

The Protocol would contain no more than the principles upon which the several Governments would have based their reply to the Russian Circular. It would be desirable that it should affirm that the present state of affairs was one which concerned the whole of Europe, and should place on record that the improvement of the condition of the Christian population of Turkey will continue to be an object of interest to all the Powers.

The Porte having repeatedly declared that it engaged to introduce reforms, it would be desirable to enumerate them on the basis of Safvet Pasha's Circular. In this way there could be no subsequent misunderstanding as to the promises made by Turkey.

As a period of some months would not be sufficient to accomplish these reforms, it would be preferable not to fix any precise limit of time. The term of a year would give rise to a belief in Russia that the army was only put provisionally on a peace footing, and that it was to be ready again for active service at the expiration of that time. It would rest with all the Powers to determine by general agreement whether Turkey was progressing in a satisfactory manner in her work of regeneration.

The Protocol should mention that Europe will continue to watch the progressive execution of the reforms by means of their Diplomatic Representatives.

If the hopes of the Powers should once more be disappointed, and the condition of the Christian subjects of the Sultan should not be improved, the Powers would reserve to themselves to consider in common the action which they would deem indispensable to secure the well-being of the Christian population of Turkey, and the interests of the general peace.

Count Schouvaloff hoped that I should appreciate the moderate and conciliatory spirit which actuated his Government in this expression of their views. They seemed to him to contain nothing incompatible with the principles on which the policy of England was based, and their application would secure the maintenance of general peace.

I made a suitable acknowledgment of his Excellency's communication, reserving any expression of opinion until I had had an opportunity of consulting my colleagues.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 555

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 69. Most Confidential.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, March 13, 1877.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 67 of this day's date, I inclose herewith a copy of the draft Protocol given to me by Count Schouvaloff, with the alterations marked thereon which I suggested in my conversation with his Excellency.

I requested his Excellency further to mention to his Government the three following provisos, to which the assent of Her Majesty's Government must be held to be subject:—

1. We considered that some formal pledge must be given of the intention of Russia to disarm if this Protocol were signed.

2. It was understood that the Porte would not be asked to sign the Protocol.

3. The agreement of the other Powers would of course be necessary before the terms of the document could be considered as settled.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

Protocol.—Draft No. 2, with Lord Derby's Amendments.

LES Puissances qui ont offert leurs bons offices pour la pacification de l'Orient et ont participé dans cette vue à la Conférence de Constantinople, reconnaissent que le moyen le plus sûr d'atteindre le but qu'elles se sont proposé, est de maintenir avant tout l'entente si heureusement établie entre elles et d'affirmer de nouveau ensemble l'intérêt commun qu'elles prennent à l'amélioration du sort des populations Chrétiennes de la Turquie.

Elles prennent acte de la conclusion de la paix avec la Serbie et le Monténégro.

(Dans le cas où la paix avec le Monténégro n'aurait pas été conclue, rappeler que les Puissances considèrent comme désirables dans l'intérêt d'un arrangement solide et durable la rectification des frontières et la libre navigation de la Boïana.)

Les Puissances considèrent les arrangements intervenus ou à intervenir entre la Porte et les deux Principautés comme une preuve de ses bonnes dispositions et comme un pas accompli vers l'apaisement qui est l'objet de leurs communs désirs.

Elles ^{engageront la Porte à} ^{demandent à la Porte de} le consolider en replaçant ses armées sur le pied de paix,* et en mettant en œuvre, dans le plus court délai possible, les réformes nécessaires pour la tranquillité et le bien-être des provinces de l'état desquelles la Conférence s'est préoccupée. Elles reconnaissent avec ^{plaisir} ^{satisfaction} que la Porte s'est déclarée prête à en réaliser la plus grande partie.

Elles prennent spécialement acte de la déclaration par laquelle le Gouvernement Ottoman a annoncé la résolution de les appliquer.

En présence de ces bonnes dispositions de la Porte et de son intérêt évident à y donner immédiatement suite, les Puissances se croient fondées à espérer que celle-ci profitera de l'apaisement actuel pour appliquer avec énergie les mesures destinées à apporter à la condition des populations Chrétiennes l'amélioration effective unanimement réclamée comme indispensable à la tranquillité de l'Europe, et, qu'une fois entrée dans cette voie, elle comprendra qu'il est de son honneur, comme de son intérêt, d'y persévérer loyalement et efficacement.

Les Puissances se proposent de veiller, par l'intermédiaire de leurs Représentants à Constantinople et de leurs Agents locaux, à la façon dont les promesses du Gouvernement Ottoman seront exécutées.

Si leur espoir se trouvait encore une fois déçu et si la condition des sujets Chrétiens du Sultan n'était pas améliorée de manière à prévenir le retour des complications qui troublent périodiquement le repos de l'Orient, elles croient devoir déclarer qu'un tel état de choses serait incompatible avec leurs intérêts et ceux de l'Europe en général. En pareil cas elles se réservent d'aviser en commun aux démarches qu'elles jugeront les plus propres à assurer le bien-être des populations Chrétiennes et les intérêts de la paix générale.

Doc. 557

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Jocelyn.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, March 13, 1877, 6 P.M.

THE Russian Ambassador informed me yesterday afternoon that his Government had already urged on the Prince of Montenegro to be moderate in his negotiations with the Porte, and that they were continuing to give advice in that sense.

Doc. 558

Mr. Jocelyn to the Earl of Derby.—(Received March 14.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, March 13, 1877, 11.30 P.M.

MINISTER for Foreign Affairs informed me to-day that Turkey was willing to cede to Montenegro certain portions of territory on the north provided that the Prince of Montenegro were willing to recognise the suzerainty of the Porte. This condition was indispensable, seeing that by the Treaty of Paris the Porte could not alienate any territory except by the consent of the Guaranteeing Powers. The demands of Montenegro being virtually those imposed by the Plenipotentiaries, Porte had already rejected by breaking

* We object to asking the Porte to disarm unless Russia undertakes to do the same, and till the insurrection is ended.

off the Conference, and his Excellency maintained that England had proposed that peace should be concluded with Principality on the basis of the *status quo*. He was fully alive to the danger of war with Russia arising from a renewal of hostilities with Principality, and to the fearful consequences which such a contest might involve, expressing a hope that, in the interest of all, the Powers would impose their will upon the Prince of Montenegro to dissuade him from demanding what could not be conceded.

In any case, he said, Turkey, while maintaining a sufficient force to keep Montenegro in check, was willing to offer most solemn assurances of her readiness to execute all the reforms already accepted by her in the Conference, and that if she could obtain from any of the Great Powers a reasonable security against attack from Russia, she would not hesitate to disarm immediately.

Doc. 559 Mr. Jocelyn to the Earl of Derby.—(Received March 14, 5:30 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, March 14, 1877, 2:16 P.M.

SEVERAL demonstrations by Softas have lately taken place in Stamboul. Their object is to demand recall of Midhat Pasha, fearing that (the) Ministry may make concessions to Montenegro.

Placards have also been posted in streets to same effect, advocating the dismissal of Sultan's brother-in-law and of Minister of War, who is considered incapable.

Several arrests have been made.

Minister of Police has been dismissed, and replaced by Commandant of Silistria, said to be very fanatical.

Doc. 560

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Jocelyn.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, March 14, 1877, 6:10 P.M.

HER Majesty's Government consider that the Porte is very ill advised to be raising the difficulties reported in your telegram of the 13th instant, with regard to Montenegro. Pacification of insurgents, and peace generally, will be scarcely possible if the war with Montenegro is kept open.

Doc. 561 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received March 14.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, March 14, 1877.

THE Chancery was also unable to decypher Monson's telegram of last night, but send directly copy, as they presume the figures ought to be:—

"I have received the three telegrams of yesterday. With reference to strategical reasons alleged by Mukhtar Pasha against acceding to the Prince's demands, I have no hesitation in saying that, on the side of Herzegovina, they are fallacious, as every European military man (who) knows the district and the history of the last campaign will agree. Nisch is and always will cause a weakness to the Turks and the line of Trebigné, Gatzko, and Foche is actually their present line of defence.

There is more to be said for the retention of Spuz as a point of great strategical importance for the defence of Albania.

Mukhtar's official false reports of his successes in the Herzegovina make it incumbent on him to maintain a fatally erroneous line of argument in the present discussion.

Doc. 562

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Jocelyn.

(No. 133A.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 14, 1877.

I HAVE to acknowledge the receipt of your telegram of the 13th instant, stating that the Minister for Foreign Affairs had informed you that Turkey was willing to cede to Montenegro certain portions of territory on the north, provided that the Prince of Montenegro were willing to recognize the suzerainty of the Porte. That this condition was indispensable, seeing that by the Treaty of Paris the Porte was unable to alienate any territory except with the consent of the Guaranteeing Powers.

That the demands of Montenegro being virtually those imposed by the Plenipotentiaries, the Porte had already rejected them by breaking off the Conference, and that the Minister for Foreign Affairs maintained that England had proposed that peace should be concluded with the Principality, on the basis of the *status quo*.

That he was fully alive to the danger of war with Russia arising from a renewal of hostilities with the Principality, and to the fearful consequences which such a contest might involve; and that his Excellency expressed a hope that, in the interests of all, the Powers would impose their will on the Prince of Montenegro to dissuade him from demanding concessions which could not be granted.

That in any case Turkey, while maintaining a sufficient force to keep Montenegro in check, was willing to offer most solemn assurances of her readiness to execute all the reforms which had been already accepted by her in the Conference, and that if she could obtain from any of the Great Powers a reasonable security against attack from Russia, she would not hesitate to disarm immediately.

In reply to this telegraphic communication from you, I instructed you by telegraph to inform the Minister for Foreign Affairs that the Porte is, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, very ill-advised in raising difficulties of the nature alluded to above, with regard to Montenegro, and that the pacification of the insurgents and peace generally will be scarcely possible if the war with Montenegro is kept open.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 563
(No. 135.)

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Jocelyn.

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 15, 1877.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 159 of the 2nd instant, respecting the colonization of Circassians in the Greek provinces of Turkey.

Her Majesty's Government have heard with much regret of the turbulent conduct of those colonists, and I have to instruct you to point out to the Porte the impolicy of arousing the resentment of the Greeks and the indignation of Europe, by establishing colonies of persons of such lawless character.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 564
(No. 148. Confidential.)

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Jocelyn.

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 15, 1877.

WITH reference to my despatch, Confidential, No 131 of the 14th instant, I transmit to you herewith, for your information, a copy of a memorandum given to me by the Russian Ambassador, containing his Excellency's observations and suggestions with regard to the draft Protocol.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 565

Inclosure in Doc. 564.

Memorandum communicated to the Earl of Derby by Count Schouvaloff, March 15, 1877.

1. IL semblerait insuffisant de n'affirmer qu'une sympathie pour les Chrétiens; il faut qu'elle se manifeste aussi pour les réformes. L'on pourrait dire en conséquence, "et d'affirmer de nouveau ensemble l'intérêt commun qu'elles prennent à l'amélioration du sort des populations Chrétiennes de la Turquie, et aux réformes à introduire en Bosnie, Herzégovine, et Bulgarie."

2. Pour obvier à l'objection de Lord Derby, l'on pourrait dire: "Elles invitent la Porte à le consolider en replaçant ses armées sur le pied de paix, sauf le nombre de troupes indispensables pour le maintien de l'ordre."

3. Afin de ne point trop affaiblir la rédaction Russe, on pourrait dire, "veiller avec soin."

1. Le mot "démarche" a en Français une nuance humiliante. Faire des démarches semble solliciter. On pourrait dire, "les moyens qu'elles jageront les plus propres." Le mot "moyen" ne peut pas être considéré comme coercitif.

Enfin une dernière observation qui a été omise ce matin. Est-il bien nécessaire d'employer l'expression "les Puissances reconnaissent avec plaisir ou satisfaction." Ne vaudrait-il pas mieux dire simplement, "reconnaissent" ou "constatent?" L'insuccès de la Conférence est trop présent encore à l'esprit des Cabinets, et plusieurs d'entre eux ne voudraient peut-être pas exprimer de la satisfaction.

Si l'énumération des réformes se fait d'après l'énumération de Salvét Pacha, j'indique le point 6, que l'Angleterre ne voudrait peut-être pas accepter; je propose de la remplacer par les deux mots, "amnistie partielle."

Doc. 566 Mr. Jocelyn to the Earl of Derby.—(Received March 16, 11.45 A.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, March 16, 1877.

MUSURUS, in reporting the conversation with your Lordship respecting the three conditions proposed by General Ignatiev to the Turkish Chargé d'Affaires at Berlin, said that you had stated that Russia would not be satisfied even if they were complied with.

Porte considers that this statement proves the uselessness of making sacrifices in order to conclude peace with Montenegro.

Doc. 567 Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received March 16.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Secret.)

Berlin, March 16, 1877.

GENERAL IGNATIEV has already communicated to German Government the modifications proposed by Her Majesty's Government in his Protocol.

The German Emperor has instructed Prince Bismarck to urge their adoption at St. Petersburg as strongly as possible.

Doc. 568 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received March 16.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, March 16, 1877.

I HAVE received the following telegram from Monson :—

"(For Lord Derby.)

"I told Prince Nicholas this afternoon that I learn from Sir A. Buchanan that it is almost certain that an understanding will be arrived at with Russia for the preservation of peace.

"Italian Agent at Ragusa has telegraphed this afternoon to the same effect, adding that the Porte refuses to cede Nisch and Spuz; and that as rupture of the negotiations may be dreaded, the Italian Government appeals to His Highness' notorious moderation and love of peace to make concessions.

"From all that has passed between me and the Prince, I am sure that it will be very difficult, if not impossible, to persuade him to give up his demands for Nisch on the side of Herzegovina, and for the Kutchi district on that of Albania.

"He said that he may be brought to relinquish his other pretensions on the side of Albania if he gains what he asks for in the Herzegovina; but I think that it would be advisable to wait for a fresh communication from the Montenegrin Delegates, and to allow His Highness to make the first concessions spontaneously. I venture, therefore, to recommend that Her Majesty's Government should defer for the present instructing me to use pressure, the time for which is not, in my opinion, yet come.

"My Austrian colleague telegraphs in the same sense to the Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs, and we are entirely agreed as to the steps we should take together."

Doc. 569 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received March 16.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, March 16, 1877.

THE information I gave privately to Monson, referred to in his telegram last night, was that "from the reports received at Vienna by the newspapers and by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, it seems almost certain that an arrangement will be come to with Russia for the preservation of peace."

Doc. 570

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Jocelyn.*

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, March 16, 1877, 7 P.M.

I HAVE agreed with the Russian Ambassador on the terms of a Protocol which Her Majesty's Government will be willing to accept on the condition of receiving a formal assurance in writing from the Russian Government that their forces will be demobilized, and on condition that other Governments also accept the Protocol. The Porte will not be called upon to sign.

Doc. 571

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.†

(No. 71. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, March 16, 1877.

WITH reference to my previous despatches, Confidential, Nos. 67 and 69 of the 13th instant, I inclose herewith, for your Excellency's information, a copy of the draft Protocol as settled between the Russian Ambassador and myself, and accepted by Count Schouvaloff *ad referendum* for the approval of his Government.

It was distinctly understood by his Excellency that Her Majesty's Government could only agree to be parties to the Protocol on the condition of receiving a formal assurance in writing from the Russian Government that their forces will be demobilized.

It is not intended that Turkey should be asked to sign the Protocol.

The Protocol of course is accepted subject to the consent of the rest of the Six Powers.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 572

Inclosure in Doc. 571.

Protocol.—Draft No. 3 as agreed to between Lord Derby and Count Schouvaloff.

LES Puissances qui ont offert leurs bons offices pour la pacification de l'Orient et ont participé dans cette vue à la Conférence de Constantinople, reconnaissent que le moyen le plus sûr d'atteindre le but qu'elles se sont proposé, est de maintenir avant tout l'entente si heureusement établie entre elles et d'affirmer de nouveau ensemble l'intérêt commun qu'elles prennent à l'amélioration du sort des populations Chrétiennes de la Turquie, et aux réformes à introduire en Bosnie, Herzégovine, et Bulgarie.

Elles prennent acte de la conclusion de la paix avec la Serbie et le Monténégro.

(Dans le cas où la paix avec le Monténégro n'aurait pas été conclue, rappeler que les Puissances considèrent comme désirable dans l'intérêt d'un arrangement solide et durable la rectification des frontières et la libre navigation de la Boïana.)

Les Puissances considèrent les arrangements intervenues ou à intervenir entre la Porte et les deux Principautés comme une preuve de ses bonnes dispositions et comme un pas accompli vers l'apaisement qui est l'objet de leurs communs désirs.

Elles invitent la Porte à le consolider en remplaçant ses armées sur le pied de paix, sauf le nombre de troupes indispensables pour le maintien de l'ordre, et en mettant en œuvre, dans le plus court délai possible, les réformes nécessaires pour la tranquillité et le bien-être des provinces de l'état desquelles la Conférence s'est préoccupée. Elles reconnaissent que la Porte s'est déclarée prête à en réaliser la plus grande partie.

* Similar telegrams were sent to Paris, Rome, Berlin, Vienna, and St. Petersburg.

† Similar despatches were addressed to Lord Lyons, Lord Odo Russell, Sir A. Buchanan, Sir A. Paget, and Mr. Jocelyn.

Elles prennent spécialement acte de la déclaration par laquelle le Gouvernement Ottoman a annoncé la résolution de les appliquer, à savoir :—

1. La réorganisation de la gendarmerie dont le projet de règlement a déjà été élaboré et remis à M. Baker, Colonel Anglais, pour être étudié.

2. La division des communes en cantons, division à laquelle il sera procédé aussitôt que les autorités provinciales auront réuni et envoyé à Constantinople les renseignements topographiques qui leur ont été demandés sur les conscriptions communales.

3. L'institution des corps de gendarmerie mixte composés du Musulmans et de Chrétiens—système déjà existant sur plusieurs points de l'Empire.

4. L'admission des sujets non-Musulmans dans les écoles militaires récemment autorisée et décrétée par notre Auguste Maître.

5. La défense de la colonisation en Roumélie de Circassiens en masse et le non-emploi des irréguliers, sauf le cas de force majeure.

6. L'interdiction déjà publiée partout du port d'armes sans une autorisation spéciale.

7. Amnistie partielle.

8. La formation des Commissions Spéciales qui seront incessamment envoyées dans les Vilayets de Bosnie, du Danube, et d'Andrinople.

9. La consécration de la liberté de culte, ainsi que la confirmation et l'application de la décision en vertu de laquelle les affaires litigieuses concernant la religion sont du ressort des Patriarcats.

10. La remise pour les localités éprouvées, et jusqu'au 1^{er} Janvier, 1877, des impôts arriérés, et

11. Les droits de propriété déjà acquis aux Chrétiens en Bosnie et en Herzégovine.

Les lois qui doivent être présentés à la première Session de la Chambre sont les suivantes :—

1. Le règlement intérieur des deux Chambres.

2. La loi électorale définitive.

3. La loi sur la presse.

4. La nouvelle loi des vilayets comprenant la loi des communes.

5. La loi municipale.

6. La loi sur la procédure civile.

7. La loi sur l'organisation des tribunaux.

8. La loi établissant la hiérarchie des Juges, ainsi que les conditions de leur avancement et de leur retraite.

9. La loi concernant les employés civils.

10. Le budget général de l'Empire.

Enfin, 11, le règlement de la nouvelle Cour des Comptes.

En présence de ces bonnes dispositions de la Porte et de son intérêt évident à y donner immédiatement suite, les Puissances se croient fondées à espérer que celle-ci profitera de l'apaisement actuel pour appliquer avec énergie les mesures destinées à apporter à la condition des populations Chrétiennes l'amélioration effective unanimement réclamée comme indispensable à la tranquillité de l'Europe, et, qu'une fois entrée dans cette voie, elle comprendra qu'il est de son honneur, comme de son intérêt, d'y persévérer loyalement et efficacement.

Les Puissances se proposent de veiller avec soin, par l'intermédiaire de leurs Représentants à Constantinople et de leurs Agents locaux, à la façon dont les promesses du Gouvernement Ottoman seront exécutées.

Si leur espoir se trouvait encore une fois déçu et si la condition des sujets Chrétiens du Sultan n'était pas améliorée de manière à prévenir le retour des complications qui troublent périodiquement le repos de l'Orient, elles croient devoir déclarer qu'un tel état de choses serait incompatible avec leurs intérêts et ceux de l'Europe en général. En pareil cas, elles se réservent d'aviser en commun aux moyens qu'elles jugeront les plus propres à assurer le bien-être des populations Chrétiennes et les intérêts de la paix générale.

Doc. 573 Vice-Consul Biliotti to the Earl of Derby —(Received March 17.)

(No. 4. Consular.)

My Lord,

Rhodes, February 24, 1877.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 3 of the 21st instant, I have the honour to report that the ceremony for reading over the Imperial Firman, appointing his Excellency

Sawa Pasha as Governor-General of the Ottoman Archipelago, has taken place at Rhodes on the 22nd instant, amidst a numerous crowd.

On this occasion his Excellency Sawa Pasha addressed to the audience a speech in Turkish and then in Greek, explaining in a few words the Constitution recently promulgated in the Ottoman Empire. His Excellency said that no distinction existing now between Mussulmans, Christians, or Jews, their being only Ottoman subjects, all of them will equally enjoy the same rights and privileges.

Sawa Pasha added that the orders he had received from His Imperial Majesty the Sultan were to devote his attention to the welfare of the population of this vilayet, and that all his efforts will tend to attain this object.

This speech made a great impression on the audience, and was followed by long applause.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHS. BILIOTTI.

Doc. 574

Mr. Monson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received March 17.)

(No. 33. Political. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Cettigné, March 8, 1877.

WITH reference to my immediately preceding despatch No. 32 of this date, respecting the possibility of Prince Nicholas abandoning his demand for a seaport in deference to Austria, I am bound to add that, in making the statement in question, His Highness spoke very bitterly of Austrian egotism, and characterized her policy towards Montenegro as most unwise.

The Prince said that his invariable experience of the Austrian Government was that it seemed impossible for statesmen at Vienna to be frank and above-board, or to have the courage of their opinions. In dealing with them it was always a matter of fencing and equivocation. They alleged reasons for their policy which were not the true ones, and thought that he was simple enough to be deluded by them. Austria made great professions of goodwill, and expected Montenegro to be grateful for an impalpable protection and an ostentatious patronage.

His Highness said further that the position of Austria rendered her the natural protectress of the Slav populations of the Balkan Peninsula; that the dread and jealousy of Russian encroachment among the Slavs of South-Eastern Europe was indubitable; and that the same sentiment did not exist, or at any rate by no means to the same extent, with regard to Austria. Yet Austria could not, or would not, recognize this, and ignored the growing power of 17,000,000 of her population.

His Highness owned that there was but little union at present among the Slavs of Turkey; but the force of events would, he argued, irresistibly encourage such a union, and it would be a fatal mistake for Austria not to take this into account.

His Highness let drop an expression to the effect that he had allowed the Government at Vienna to understand that he was willing to accept the supremacy of Austria as the future head of the Slav nationalities—a position to which, in his opinion, she is in every way entitled, and which she will be driven to assume in spite of herself—but that he had met with no encouragement.

“Petty Prince as I am,” said His Highness, “I can make myself very disagreeable even to a great Power like Austria, and I think she would be well advised if she abstained from offensive attempts at domineering.”

His Highness added much more to the same effect, but I think I have said enough to give your Lordship a fair idea of his sentiments.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

Doc. 575

Count Andrassy to Count Beust.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Count Beust, March 17.)

M. le Comte,

Vienne, le 14 Mars, 1877.

J'AI pris connaissance avec intérêt de votre rapport du 7 courant. Sur plusieurs points je partage les réflexions judicieuses de votre Excellence au sujet des lacunes du Traité de Paris de 1856. Il a subi de profondes altérations. Dans son ensemble il ne

répond pas à toutes les exigences, mais, à défaut de mieux, il correspond le plus à la situation présente. C'est moins sa valeur intrinsèque que la difficulté de le remplacer qui milite en faveur de son maintien. L'entente aurait peine surtout à s'établir sur une nouvelle garantie de l'intégrité de l'Empire Ottoman. Dès lors, l'abrogation des anciennes transactions ouvrirait la carrière aux rivalités et à l'anarchie. Elle compromettrait davantage encore la paix de l'Europe. Pour ces motifs je dois prier votre Excellence de vouloir bien éviter dans vos entretiens avec les hommes d'Etat de l'Angleterre tout ce qui pourrait leur laisser l'impression que nous poursuivons une révision du Traité dont il s'agit.

Un arrangement direct entre la Russie et la Turquie nous paraît peu probable. De part et d'autre, la méfiance est trop grande, les esprits sont trop montés. D'ailleurs je ne prévois guère que des tentatives éventuelles à cet effet, si elles devaient aboutir, puissent avoir pour résultat un accommodement qui satisfasse les exigences si opposés des deux pays ou qui pourrait être de nature à mettre sérieusement en péril nos intérêts.

Recevez, &c.
(Signé) ANDRASSY.

Doc. 576

Memorandum communicated to the Earl of Derby by Count Schouvaloff, March 17.

LE Cabinet Impérial accepte le Projet de Protocole avec les modifications suivantes :—

1. En place de :

Puissances qui ont offert leurs bons offices. Les Puissances qui ont entrepris en commun la pacification de l'Orient.

Le résultat de toutes les modifications proposées par Lord Derby ayant très sensiblement affaibli la signification et la portée du Protocole, le Cabinet Impérial propose à son tour quelques changements :—

2. Au lieu de :

Affirmer l'intérêt commun.

D'insister sur les réformes qu'elles ont jugés indispensables d'introduire en Bosnie, Herzégovine, et Bulgarie, pour l'amélioration du sort des populations Chrétiennes et que la Porte a acceptées sauf à les appliquer elle-même.

3. A l'Article de la Paix avec le Monténégro ajouter :

Sur la base des conditions proposées par la Conférence.

4. En place de :

De l'état desquels la Conférence s'est préoccupée.

Sur les bases suggérées par la Conférence.

En dernier lieu, le Cabinet Impérial croit préférable de substituer à

5. L'énumération des points :

La phrase :

Elles prennent spécialement acte des déclarations à ce sujet faites par le Gouvernement Ottoman pendant la Conférence, et depuis par l'entremise de ses Représentants.

(Signé) C^{te} SCHOUVALOFF.

Doc. 577

Memorandum.

COUNT SCHOUVALOFF called upon Lord Derby with General Ignatiev to-day, and after discussing the corrections in the wording of the Protocol which Lord Derby adopted, as shown in the draft of to-day, General Ignatiev suggested that instead of the

enumeration of the reforms taken from the Turkish Circular it might be better to insert the following paragraph :—

“Elles prennent spécialement acte des déclarations à ce sujet faites par le Gouvernement Ottoman pendant la Conférence et depuis par l'entremise de ses Représentants.”

Lord Derby said that he did not personally see any objection to such an alteration, but as it was an alteration of a material character he felt that he could not adopt it without consulting his colleagues, with whom the present draft had been settled in Cabinet. At the same time if the Russian Government proposed it he did not suppose Her Majesty's Government would make any difficulty in accepting it.

Foreign Office, March 17, 1877.

Doc. 578

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, March 19.)

(Télégraphique.)

Constantinople, le 17 Mars, 1877.

NOUS n'avons pas pu connaître jusqu'ici la véritable mission du Général Ignatiew. Les Cabinets paraissent avoir pris à tâche à nous la cacher soigneusement. M. de Bülow, à qui notre Chargé d'Affaires à Berlin avait demandé par indiscretion la nature de la mission confiée au Général, a répondu qu'il l'ignorait complètement. Le Duc Decazes n'a pas cru devoir satisfaire non plus la curiosité de Nasri Bey. Seul M. Melegari a eu la naïveté d'attribuer au voyage de l'Ambassadeur de Russie quelque portée politique sans s'expliquer davantage. Les explications de Lord Derby même ne sont pas de nature à dissiper entièrement nos doutes et nos inquiétudes à cet égard. Tout ce que nous comprenons de différentes rumeurs qui circulent à ce sujet c'est qu'on prépare pour nous quelque mesure afin de nous obliger à exécuter, dans un délai fixé par les Cabinets, les réformes promises par nous dans la Conférence. Nous ne savons non plus si la question de désarmement de la Russie simultanément avec nous est agitée à cette occasion. Nous ignorons également quelles sont les mesures projetées ; seraient-elles comme les dispositions prises à Constantinople dans les réunions préliminaires des Plénipotentiaires en notre absence et sans nous consulter préalablement ? Je prie très-instamment votre Excellence de vouloir bien m'éclairer sur tout ce qui se rattache à ces points importants et me télégraphier vos renseignements pour que nous n'arrivons pas au dernier moment.

Doc. 579

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, March 19.)

(Télégraphique.)

Constantinople, le 17 Mars, 1877.

REÇU télégramme.

Veuillez prier instamment Lord Derby de vouloir bien différer la signature de l'Acte signalé dans le dit télégramme. Je m'empresserai de vous faire connaître nos considérations, ainsi que notre manière de voir à l'égard de certaines dispositions qu'on se propose de prendre concernant l'exécution des réformes promises par la Sublime Porte.

Doc. 580

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received March 19, 11.15 A.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, March 18, 1877, 11 P.M.

FOLLOWING is from Monson, dated to-day :—

Italian Government yesterday telegraphed to Prince Nicholas to the effect that he is not sufficiently conciliatory.

His Highness replied that he hopes the Italian Government will tell him what they wish him to do.

I told him this morning that the news by the last mail indicated an approaching understanding between the Great Powers, and he seems quite aware of the fact.

I see no reason to press him more urgently.

Doc. 581 Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received March 19.)

(Telegraphic.)

Scutari, March 19, 1877, 10.5 A.M.

I HAVE been informed confidentially that the Grand Vizier has telegraphed to the Commander-in-chief here that the Porte, rather than accord present demands of Montenegrin delegates, will resume hostilities; and his Highness has asked the Commander-in-chief how many battalions he requires to undertake a successful campaign against the Principality.

Telegraphed to Constantinople.

Doc. 582

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 88.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, March 21, 1877.

THE Russian Ambassador called to-day, in company with General Ignatiew, to discuss the question of the alterations proposed by his Government in the Protocol on which we had provisionally agreed, and the conditions on which this Protocol should be signed.

I thought it right to communicate to them, in the first instance, what I understood to be the decision of the Cabinet, namely, that it would be inexpedient to enter into discussion of the verbal amendments that had been suggested in the Protocol, until an understanding had been arrived at on the question of demobilization.

I repeated what I had before stated, that Her Majesty's Government attached no special importance to the form in which the required assurance might be given; but that, inasmuch as the demobilization of the Russian forces was the inducement held out to us to sign the Protocol, and the assurance of it was our justification for so doing, we must be able to lay before Parliament evidence that our object in that respect had been secured.

Both Count Schouvaloff and General Ignatiew opposed this view. The objections which they took may be summed up briefly as follows. They contended in the first place that the bargain as offered by us was not a fair one. Turkey, not being required to sign the Protocol, was in no way pledged to disarm; the recommendation to do so, addressed to her by the Powers, being merely in the nature of advice. It was unreasonable, they argued, that Russia should bind herself to disarm as a condition of our signing a document which left Turkey free on that point. They objected, secondly, that the state of war still continues between Turkey and Montenegro; that if the Montenegrin State were to be attacked and invaded, Russia would be bound in honour to interfere for its protection, the fulfilment of which duty would be rendered impossible to her by a promise of demobilization. Thirdly, they argued that as a question of dignity it was unsuitable that Russia should be called upon to disarm before any similar appeal was addressed to Turkey.

It was the Porte which ought to take the initiative, inasmuch as it was not before Russia alone, but before all Europe, that she was called upon to lay down her arms. They observed, further, that the condition of the two armies was essentially different—the Russian army being composed of regular troops, subject to strict military discipline; whereas the Turkish forces were to a large extent composed of irregulars, whose remaining under arms was a perpetual source of danger to the surrounding population.

In continuation of this argument, they pointed out that the demobilization of the Russian forces can be accomplished in eight days; that the Turkish troops, on the other hand, could not be sent back to their homes under a period of many weeks, or perhaps months; and it was only reasonable, therefore, that the latter should be the first to begin the process. In connection with this subject, General Ignatiew observed that so large a part of the male population of Asiatic Turkey had been withdrawn from the cultivation of the soil for the purpose of being placed under arms, that unless they were speedily sent home, famine would be the inevitable result.

I asked whether they could give me any statement as to the conditions under which the Russian Government would undertake to demobilize, supposing always that they were ready to give such assurances on any conditions and in any form.

Count Schouvaloff was not authorized to speak officially on the subject, but he expressed it as his opinion, in which General Ignatiew also concurred, that the Emperor would be willing to disarm on three conditions:—

1. That the Porte should take the initiative.
2. That peace should be concluded with Montenegro as it had been with Servia.
3. That the Turkish reforms should be seriously taken in hand.

And he added a further proviso that it must be understood that demobilisation would be stopped at once in the event of fresh massacres being perpetrated on the Christian populations.

I remarked that the language held by the Russian Ambassador seemed to me of a less reassuring tendency than that which he had used on previous occasions, but that for the present I should content myself with referring their observations to the consideration of my colleagues.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 583 Mr. Monson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received March 22.)

(No. 36. Political.)

My Lord,

Cettigné, March 10, 1877.

I INFORMED Prince Nicholas this afternoon of the renewed instructions sent by Her Majesty's Government to Mr. Jocelyn that he should use his good offices, if opportunity offers, to bring about an understanding between Turkey and Montenegro.

His Highness charged me to state to your Lordship that the Porte proposes to cede portions of four districts in the Herzegovina, in exchange for part of the Wassoievitchi, which is his most valuable district.

His Highness declares that he foresees an agreement to be impossible, as he must insist on receiving at least as much as the Six Powers proposed; but that he has, nevertheless instructed his Delegates not to leave Constantinople for the present.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

Doc. 584 Mr. Monson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received March 22.)

(No. 37. Political.)

My Lord,

Cettigné, March 11, 1877.

DURING my conversation with Prince Nicholas yesterday, His Highness remarked that the selection made by the Porte of Moukhtar and Constant Pashas as negotiators, was to him quite sufficient proof of the spirit which animates the Turks, and of the improbability of any good result attending the negotiations.

I see by your Lordship's telegram of yesterday, which I have received this afternoon, that Mr. Jocelyn had pointed out to the Ottoman Government the impolicy of this selection, than which I can imagine nothing more likely to prejudice the chances of a harmonious solution of the questions at issue.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

Doc. 585 Mr. Monson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received March 22.)

(No. 38. Political.)

My Lord,

Cettigné, March 11, 1877.

WITH reference to Mr. Jocelyn's telegram of the day before yesterday, respecting the demands of Montenegro, I would remark that, while as yet Prince Nicholas continues to declare that he will not abate one item of his pretensions, there are at any rate two points upon which, whatever he may decide upon with regard to the others, I am confident it will be useless to attempt to persuade him to give way.

He will not make peace without obtaining the cession of Nisch and the Douga Pass on the northern, and (probably) of the Kutchi district on the south-eastern frontier.

Nor will he consent to any terms which do not include adequate security for, and his own co-operation in, the undisturbed restoration of the refugees to their homes, with provision for their immediate wants and protection from the vengeance of the Mussulmans. Indeed, he cannot do otherwise; for it would be impossible to effect the return of these refugees, unless he can personally declare to them that they may re-enter the Herzegovina in safety.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

Doc. 586

Mr. Monson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received March 22.)

(No. 39. Political.)

My Lord,

Cettigné, March 11, 1877.

PRINCE NICHOLAS told me yesterday that he intended to summon certain of the insurgent Herzegovinian Chiefs to Cettigné this week, for the purpose of having them at hand in the event of its being necessary to concert upon measures rendered expedient by the turn of the negotiations at Constantinople.

Their presence here would in fact be equally imperative either in view of peace or of a recommencement of hostilities.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

P.S.—Since writing the above I learn that Prince Nicholas has received telegrams from the Chiefs stating that it would be impossible for them to come to Cettigné this week. I presume that one very excellent reason may be that the quantity of snow makes locomotion in these mountainous regions a matter of extreme difficulty.

E. M.

Doc. 587

Mr. Monson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received March 22.)

(No. 40. Political. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Cettigné, March 11, 1877.

I CANNOT as yet report any modification, in a pacific sense, of Prince Nicholas' language respecting the conditions of peace with the Porte. I had a long conversation with His Highness yesterday, and found, I am sorry to say, that his tenacity to the demands he has made is as great as ever. He repeated that Spitza was the only point upon which he was likely to yield; and remarked that as the seaport had been omitted from the propositions of the Great Powers, he had less difficulty in deferring to the wishes of Austria that he should not insist upon it.

But as to all the rest of the programme he was inexorable, and spoke in terms more uncompromising, I think, than I have yet heard fall from his lips.

He said, for instance, that he had offers of assistance from Servians who were ashamed of the defeat and humiliation of their Principality; that fifty Servian officers had offered him their services; and that he could reckon upon foreign volunteers to the extent of several thousands in number, quite as many as he should want; that if the Turks could penetrate as far as Grahovo on the north, and Danilograd on the south, it would be the utmost that they could do; that in the worst of cases the Slav Committees would supply him with vessels sufficient to send out of the country the women and children; and that with the fighting population he would hold the mountains, which the Turks would never be able to over-run; that he could continue the struggle under these circumstances for two or three years; and that then, if Europe had no compassion on him, he would emigrate to America with the remnant of his people. He observed that he had seen in the Blue Book that I had stated that the present condition of Montenegro is a disaster to Europe, and that I must therefore admit that he had no choice but to push his pretensions at the risk of eventual annihilation.

Your Lordship will certainly think that such language is the outcome of bravado and exaggeration; and yet it was uttered in a very simple, earnest, straightforward way. I could not, of course, avoid showing much astonishment as its purport, upon which the Prince said, "*Vous croyez que je parle poétiquement; mais je vous donne ma parole d'honneur que c'est tout ce qu'il y a de plus sérieux, ce que je viens de vous dire.*"

And I cannot but think that His Highness has in truth thoroughly persuaded himself that he is doing the right thing. He has repeatedly said to me: "*J'ai la conscience nette, devant Dieu, et devant mon peuple; c'est tout ce qu'il me faut.*" And, as a matter of fact, his spirits have risen during the last two or three weeks, the conclusion of peace by Servia seeming not in the least to discourage him. I am myself amazed when I see this man, upon whose decision such grave events may depend, enjoying like a schoolboy the desperate snow-balling contests in which his Senators, Aides-de-camp, and Guards employ their leisure, and in which irreverent missiles do not always spare his own Princely person.

I wish that I could persuade myself that his apparent freedom from apprehension gave promise of a disposition to spare his country the horrors of further bloodshed; but I

do not feel myself justified as yet in encouraging Her Majesty's Government with any such idea.

My Austrian colleague, who has known the Prince intimately for many years, although more sanguine than I am that His Highness may eventually change his mind, does not conceal from me his conviction that, unless the Porte makes very substantial concessions, there is a certainty of the renewal of hostilities.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

Doc. 588 Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 5, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

Rome, April 5, 1877, 5.15 P.M.

ITALIAN Consul at Scutari telegraphs at one o'clock last night that the Ottoman troops intended to attack the Mirdites immediately; that he, with his English colleague, obtained 40 hours suspension; but the other Consuls refused to join.

Italian Government telegraphed to Constantinople to endeavour to dissuade the Porte from attacking Mirdites, and hope Her Majesty's Government will do the same.

Doc. 589 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 5.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Confidential.)

Vienna, April 5, 1877, 5 P.M.

MINISTER for Foreign Affairs expressed much anxiety to me to-day at the reports received from Constantinople and Cettigné. He fears that unless Russia warns the Prince of Montenegro that he will get no support if he persists in his demands, His Highness will make no further concessions, and he thinks that energetic language will also be required at Constantinople to prevent war.

Since seeing him I have received your telegram to Mr. Jocelyn of to-day, and I shall acquaint his Excellency with its substance. Prince Nicholas is reported to be making arrangements with the Mirdites and a collision between them and Dervish Pasha has been, however, only prevented by the intervention of the Consuls, or rather delayed for forty-eight hours till instructions can be received from Constantinople. The newspapers report that the Commander-in-chief at Mostar is collecting forces to relieve Nicksich on the expiration of the armistice, and the various insurgent bands in Bosnia are said to amount together to 3,000 men. The Russian Embassy here profess to be ignorant of M. Jonine having passed through Vienna, but his having done so has been reported by the police.

Doc. 590 Mr. Jocelyn to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 5.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, April 5, 1877, 5 P.M.

MINISTER for Foreign Affairs stated to me this morning, in the presence of Grand Vizier, as the expression of his personal opinion, that should Russia consent to withdraw the Declaration, and to leave the question of territorial cession to Montenegro open till later, when he hoped for an amicable arrangement, he would undertake, not only that the required reforms should be seriously carried out, but that the refugees should be re-established to the satisfaction of Prince Nicholas, and that an Envoy should be sent to St. Petersburg to treat of reciprocal disarmament.

Doc. 591 Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 6.)

(Telegraphic.)

St. Petersburg, April 6, 1877.

I HAVE just seen Prince Gortchakow. In regard to Montenegro he says that Nicksich is not the only or real difficulty; there is, besides, a question of vassalage and of the territorial claims urged by the Porte.

He considers last proposals of Prince of Montenegro very moderate, and is informed that if rejected by the Porte negotiations will be broken off, the Prince remaining on the defensive and on basis of *uti possidetis*.

In regard to the Protocol Prince Gortchakow said that Russia requires not the acceptance of the Protocol, but of the conditions contained in the declaration by Count Schouvaloff, and, as proof, the sending of a Special Envoy to St. Petersburg to arrange question of disarmament.

Should the Porte reply verbally, or in unsatisfactory and evasive language, war will result, as Russia cannot longer bear the heavy pecuniary sacrifices of prolonged profitless negotiation.

I told his Highness of the urgent advice sent in your Lordship's telegram of yesterday to Mr. Jocelyn, and I drew his attention to the engagement in the last paragraph of the Protocol.

Prince Gortchakow replied that your Lordship's declaration rendered the Protocol null and void in event of non-fulfilment of reciprocal disarmament and peace. His Highness said that it was a question of days, and that a decision must be taken by the 13th of April. The Emperor would not withdraw; a manifesto was prepared; answer of the Porte would decide for peace or war.

It is important, I think, that the Porte should announce readiness to send a Special Envoy to St. Petersburg. A Mussulman would be preferred here to a Christian.

Prince Gortchakow spoke with calmness, but with great decision.

Doc. 592

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Jocelyn.

(No. 231.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, April 6, 1877.

I HAVE received from Mr. Monson telegraphic information that the Turkish Government has ordered an immediate attack on the Mirdites; but that Mr. Monson, in conjunction with his Italian colleague, has obtained from the authorities an unofficial promise that they would grant a delay of forty hours before undertaking active operations.

In view of these circumstances I have to instruct you to advise the Porte to refrain from commencing any attack on the Mirdites, at all events for the present.

To avoid delay I have sent you instructions this day to the above effect by telegraph.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 593

Mr. Monson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 7.)

(No. 69. Political.)

My Lord,

Cettigné, March 27, 1877.

A VERY acrimonious polemic is being waged between the "Istok" of Belgrade, which I believe is the recognized organ of M. Ristich, and the "Glas Czrnagortza," or Montenegrin Journal.

A recent article in the "Istok," of which the Servian Minister is here considered to have been himself the author, depreciated the value of the Montenegrin victories of last autumn and the efficacy of Prince Nicholas' co-operation in the war against Turkey.

His Highness has consequently caused the insertion in the "Glas Czrnagortza" of the 24th instant of a leading article reproaching the Servians for their precipitation in concluding peace without any thought of, or care for, their ally, and criticising Servian courage and military capacity in a not too friendly spirit.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

Doc. 594 Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 7, 1 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

Scutari, April 7, 1877, 8:40 A.M.

ITALIAN Consul and I, having strengthened by more complete support our colleagues of Austria and France, wished to make a further communication to authorities on the subject of our proposed good offices.

Authorities declined to receive any communication whatsoever from Consuls, individual or collective, in connection with Mirdite affairs, and refused peremptorily our visit.

Under these circumstances we are powerless to influence them for good.

I believe Turks are acting in this matter under the wrong impression that they will be able to punish Mirdites before further interference is possible.

Doc. 595 Mr. Jocelyn to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 7, 2 P.M.)

(Telegraphic)

(Secret and Confidential.)

Constantinople, April 7, 1877, 10.30 A.M.

I HAVE received a very confidential communication from the Grand Vizier, in which his Highness says that he cannot understand the reason for Russia insisting so positively upon Delegate being sent to Petersburg to treat on a subject which in his opinion in no way calls for such a step.

His Highness entertains the gravest suspicions that real object of the mission is to endeavour to bring about an alliance with Turkey, and to conclude another Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi.

The action of Persian Minister at the Palace, where he is now a frequent visitor, may be considered as bearing upon this idea, and his Highness asked me quite lately whether Her Majesty's Government knew of an offensive and defensive alliance having been concluded between Russia and Persia?

I replied that I was without information on the subject.

Doc. 596 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 7, 5 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, April 7, 1877, 2.40 P.M.

IN consequence of an urgent telegram received last night from the Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Prince Nicholas has telegraphed to the Delegates not to leave Constantinople until further orders, and His Highness will, after the expiration of the armistice, remain on the defensive.

Doc. 597

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received Received April 7, 5 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, April 7, 1877, 3 P.M.

I UNDERSTAND that the German Embassy continue to consider the maintenance of peace as extremely improbable.

Count Andrassy will leave this evening for Hungary with the intention of being absent ten or twelve days.

Doc. 598

Mr. Jocelyn to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 8.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, April 8, 1877, 10 A.M.

I COMMUNICATED to Grand Vizier, confidentially, this morning substance of Lord A. Loftus' telegram of 6th instant, urging upon him absolute necessity of declaring his readiness to send Special Envoy to Russia in order to avoid war. His Highness stated that Russian Chargé d'Affaires had spoken to him yesterday much in the same sense, but he could see in the pacific solution, which might now be arrived at, nothing more than a truce, which might be broken at any moment by Russia, when Turkey would be at her mercy. A Cabinet Council was to meet at the Palace to-day, when he thought some decision might be arrived at. The Sultan, he said, was peaceably inclined, but would never be willing to compromise the honour of his country.

Doc. 599 Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 8.)

(Telegraphic.)

Scutari, April 8, 1877, 12.30 P.M.

FOLLOWING telegram sent to Mr. Jocelyn:—

"Military movement against Mirdicia has been resumed since Friday. (Reports of Dervish Pasha?) I fear are misleading Porte. Reported attack on Alepikas appears to

have been false alarm of outpost purposely adopted by the authorities. Their assertions that at least ten soldiers have been killed also appear unfounded. Villages on the spurs of the mountains will necessarily fall into the hands of the troops, and we must be prepared to hear of atrocities, whether they are committed or not."

Doc. 600 Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 8.)

(Telegraphic.)

St. Petersburg, April 8, 1877, 2 P.M.

I AM confident that if proposals of the nature reported in telegram from Constantinople of 5th instant, as the personal opinion of Minister for Foreign Affairs, were submitted to Russian Government, they would be considered as a direct refusal by the Porte of the Protocol and Declaration, and would lead to immediate war.

Porte must abandon all illusion as to any further concessions from Russia.

Doc. 601 Mr. Jocelyn to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 9, 2.15 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Very Confidential.)

Constantinople, April 9, 1877, 10.35 A.M.

THE policy of the German Government at present crisis appears to be one of total abstention from action.

During the last few days my colleagues and I have been making every effort to induce Porte to take measures to insure peace, whilst German Chargé d'Affaires appears to have no orders on the subject, and there are not wanting signs that his Government is rather inclined to encourage it in this resistance.

Doc. 602 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 9.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, April 9, 1877, 4 P.M.

INFORMATION having been received here yesterday respecting modified manner in which Porte thinks of accepting the Protocol, instructions were again sent to Austrian Chargé d'Affaires to urge impolicy of Porte incurring the responsibility of making objections to its provisions.

Count Andrassy has not yet left, but will probably do so to-morrow.

Doc. 603 The Earl of Derby to Mr. Jocelyn.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, April 9, 1877, 4.45 P.M.

RUSSIAN Ambassador in conversation to-day expressed conviction of absolute necessity if war was to be averted of an Ambassador being sent from Constantinople to treat directly at St. Petersburg. With regard to the other question now under consideration, namely, the terms of peace between Turkey and Montenegro, he thought that delay, however injurious, would not be fatal; but he expressed most serious apprehension of consequences that might follow if the Porte showed itself unwilling to enter at once on a negotiation with his Government having mutual disarmament for its object.

I promised to make known to you the substance of his communication without delay.

Inform Porte accordingly.

Doc. 604 Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 9, 5.45 P.M.)*

(Telegraphic.)

St. Petersburg, April 9, 1877, 3 P.M.

PRINCE GORTCHAKOW has received this morning very unsatisfactory intelligence from Constantinople.

Porte apparently refuses the Protocol, and whilst accepting the Declaration with reserves will only send Envoy to St. Petersburg provided that Russian Envoy be also sent to Constantinople.

Porte has decided to attack Mirdites and to blockade Montenegro. Under present circumstances it is, I believe, decided to publish Imperial manifesto on the 13th instant. Notwithstanding the critical state of affairs, Prince Gortchakow told French Ambassador this morning that a Turkish Special Envoy would still be received if instructed to treat seriously.

Doc. 605

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 119. Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, April 9, 1877.

COUNT BEUST informed me to-day confidentially that the Austro-Hungarian Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople had been instructed to make representations in the following sense to the Turkish Government:—

He was to state that the Austro-Hungarian Government, having learnt the nature of the objections made by the Porte to the Protocol, wished him to declare that, in their opinion, it contained nothing incompatible with the dignity and independence of Turkey; that they considered that the refusal to cede Nisch, Colacin, and Kutchi, made peace with Montenegro an impossibility; that they held it to be the interest of Turkey to do her utmost to re-establish peace, and I saw no loss of dignity in a direct negotiation with Russia respecting disarmament without the intervention of the other Powers; that, in short, looking upon the Protocol as an instrument calculated to facilitate a settlement which would be most acceptable to the Porte, they could only consider its rejection as a danger to the peace of Europe, the responsibility for which would rest upon it alone. He was, consequently, to urge the Porte to accept the Protocol, and to point out that this advice was entirely disinterested, as, on the outbreak of war, Austria-Hungary would be prepared at all points to protect her own interests from injury.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 606

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 11.)

(Telegraphic.)

St. Petersburg, April 11, 1877.

I LEARNED from Prince Gortchakow this morning that the Porte has rejected the Protocol, declaration, and terms of peace with Montenegro, consequently there was no further motive for the presence of a Turkish Envoy at St. Petersburg.

My impression is that Russia, before taking any isolated action, will make a further appeal to Europe, although I am not officially told so.

Doc. 607

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 11.)

(Telegraphic.)

Scutari, April 11, 1877.

EXPEDITION from Miet made a further advance yesterday, and after a short engagement took some more of the Mirdite positions. Troops only one; Christians several killed and wounded.

Native reports, not yet confirmed, state that Turkish force from Plana near Alessio has met with serious reverse.

Doc. 608

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 11.)

(Telegraphic.)

Tiflis, April 11, 1877.

I AM told that telegram has been received by Grand Duke from St. Petersburg ordering army to be in readiness to march by the 13th instant. Officers on leave ordered to their posts, 38th and 20th divisions not yet arrived. Effective operations difficult during their absence. Two other divisions are, it is said, ordered from Russia to form reserve. Three battalions leave for frontier.

Doc. 609
(No. 131.)

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

My Lord,

Foreign Office, April 11, 1877.

IN consequence of the motion of which Lord Hartington has given notice in the House of Commons for the production of the original draft of Protocol communicated to me on the 11th ultimo by the Russian Ambassador, I asked Count Schouvaloff this afternoon whether his Government would have any objection to the publication of this document.

His Excellency stated, in reply, that the publication would, in the opinion of his Government be inconvenient, and that they thought it better that the original draft should not be presented to Parliament.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 610 *Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 12.)*

(No. 137. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Berlin, April 10, 1877.

IN a conversation on the coming Turko-Russian war, Her Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg reports, in his despatch No. 152 of the 6th instant, that Prince Gortchakow observed that it was now a question of days, and that a decision one way or the other must be taken by the 13th of April.

I gather from various conversations with well-informed persons that General Todleben, who was here on the 22nd ultimo, took the same view as the German military authorities on the coming campaign, namely, that it would be useless to commence serious operations before the roads were dry, because the wants of the army will have to be entirely supplied from Russia, and commissariat carts could not advance or follow with sufficient rapidity on bad roads.

It is thought that the crossing of the Pruth and the march to the Danube will occupy from five to six weeks. The crossing of the Danube may be a long and difficult operation, the duration of which cannot well be calculated beforehand, but the march from the Danube to the Balkan offers no strategical impediments and will be accomplished with comparative ease.

Military authorities and well-informed politicians in Berlin do not appear to think that Constantinople will be threatened, and the majority appear to wish the campaign to take place this summer, and not to be put off to another year, because they think that delaying an unavoidable war any longer would only be detrimental to commerce and industry, and to the final establishment of a sound and lasting peace.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 611

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, April 12.)

(Télégraphique.)

Constantinople, le 9 Avril, 1877.

LA Sublime Porte a reçu communication du Protocole signé à Londres le 31 Mars, 1877, par le Principal Secrétaire d'Etat des Affaires Etrangères de Sa Majesté Britannique et par les Ambassadeurs d'Allemagne, d'Autriche-Hongrie, de France, d'Italie, et de Russie, ainsi que des déclarations y annexées du Principal Secrétaire d'Etat des Affaires Etrangères de Sa Majesté Britannique et des Ambassadeurs d'Italie et de Russie.

En prenant connaissance de ces actes, la Sublime Porte a éprouvé le regret très vif de voir que les Grandes Puissances amies n'ont pas cru devoir faire participer le Gouvernement Impérial à des délibérations dans lesquelles on a pourtant agité des questions ayant trait aux intérêts les plus vitaux de l'Empire. L'entière déférence dont le Gouvernement Impérial a fait preuve en toute circonstance aux conseils et aux vœux des Grandes Puissances, l'intime solidarité qui unit si heureusement les intérêts de l'Empire à ceux du reste de l'Europe, les principes d'équité les plus incontestables, enfin, des engagements solennels autorisaient la Sublime Porte à croire qu'elle serait appelée, elle aussi, à concourir à l'œuvre destinée à rendre la paix à l'Orient et à

établir l'entente entre les Grandes Puissances à ce sujet, sur une base juste et légitime.

Mais, du moment qu'il n'en a pas été ainsi, la Sublime Porte se voit dans l'obligation impérieuse de réclamer contre l'autorité d'un tel précédent et de signaler les funestes conséquences qui pourraient en résulter dans l'avenir aussi, pour les principes tutélaires de la sécurité des relations entre Etats.

Passant à l'examen de ces actes, la Sublime Porte a acquis la conviction que, si les Puissances Signataires avaient tenu un meilleur compte de l'échange de vues qui s'était établi lors des Conférences de Constantinople, des résultats obtenus dans l'intervalle qui s'est écoulé depuis, et de la nature des dangers nouveaux qui menacent la paix, il eût été peut-être facile d'arriver par une pondération équitable des grands intérêts en cause à un accord définitif qui ne fût subordonné ni à de graves lésions de droit ni à des conditions irréalisables.

Pendant les Conférences de Constantinople la Sublime Porte, s'appuyant sur la Constitution que Sa Majesté Impériale venait d'octroyer spontanément, et qui réalisait la réforme la plus large qui ait été vue dans cet Empire depuis son établissement, s'était efforcée de démontrer l'injustice de toute mesure qui, sous l'apparence de réforme, prendrait son développement dans des distinctions de provinces, de croyances ou de classes de sujets, ainsi que l'impossibilité pour elle de rien accepter de contraire à l'intégrité ou à l'indépendance de l'Empire. Ce double point de vue répond pleinement aux conditions du programme Anglais accepté par les Puissances. Ce programme posait en principe le maintien de l'intégrité et de l'indépendance de l'Empire, et demandait pour certaines provinces un système d'institutions offrant des gages contre la mauvaise administration et des actes d'autorité arbitraire. Or, le système d'institutions réclamées se trouvait naturellement réalisé en droit comme en fait par la nature même de la nouvelle organisation politique donnée à l'Empire sans distinction de langues, de croyances ou de provinces. Depuis lors, le Parlement Ottoman a été convoqué, et une Assemblée, issue d'un système d'élections libérales, et qui sera prochainement arrêté de manière à ne laisser prise à aucune critique fondée, siège actuellement à Constantinople et discute en pleine liberté les affaires les plus importantes de l'Etat. Si l'on a objecté contre ce système de réformes qu'il était encore trop nouveau pour porter immédiatement ses fruits, on peut faire remarquer en réponse que c'est là une objection qui aurait pu être tout aussi bien soulevée contre les réformes recommandées par les Plénipotentiaires étrangers et en général contre toute réforme qui, par cela même qu'elle constitue une innovation, ne saurait posséder dès le principe l'efficacité que la consécration du temps fait seule acquérir.

D'un autre côté, la sécurité intérieure était solidement rétablie. La Servie était rendue à la tranquillité, et des négociations, dans lesquelles la Sublime Porte continue de faire preuve de la plus grande modération, ont été entamées avec le Monténégro.

Malheureusement un fait nouveau se produisait dans l'intervalle, et les armements extraordinaires qui ont lieu depuis quelques mois dans toute l'étendue de la Russie, en obligeant la Sublime Porte à pourvoir à des mesures de défense, non seulement n'ont pas permis d'arriver à un apaisement complet des esprits, mais ont même fini par amener une situation pleine de dangers. La Sublime Porte se rendra la justice de constater qu'elle n'a rien négligé de ce qui était de nature à dissiper les doutes, à calmer les inquiétudes, et à ménager les susceptibilités les plus délicates.

A peine sortie des longs et dures épreuves que les menées révolutionnaires avaient cherché à déchaîner sur toutes les provinces de l'Empire, il était naturel qu'elle n'aspirât qu'au repos, et qu'elle n'eût d'autre désir que de se consacrer un moment plus tôt au travail fécond de sa régénération intérieure. Elle n'a pu, dès lors, que plus vivement déplorer de voir cet objet constant de ses vœux s'éloigner tous les jours davantage, au fur et à mesure que les nécessités majeures qu'on cherchait à lui imposer ne lui laissaient d'autre alternative que d'exiger de ses populations des sacrifices onéreux, d'épuiser ses finances par de grandes dépenses improductives, et de s'occuper avant tout de la manière dont elle parviendrait à détourner un conflit de nature à troubler profondément la paix du monde.

Il est naturel que les Grandes Puissances se soient préoccupées de cette situation. La Sublime Porte, pour des raisons qui ne demandent pas à être développées, avait évité jusqu'à présent d'appeler officiellement l'attention des Puissances sur cette nouvelle phase de la question, la plus grave de toutes assurément. Mais les déclarations dont leurs Excellences Lord Derby et le Comte Schouvaloff ont fait précéder la signature du Protocole lui fournissent à elle aussi, aujourd'hui, occasion de saisir les Cabinets

amis de l'urgence qu'il y a de mettre un terme à cette complication si dangereuse, et dont il n'est pas au pouvoir de la Sublime Porte de retarder le dénouement longtemps encore.

En conséquence, et en réponse à la déclaration de Son Excellence l'Ambassadeur de Russie, la Sublime Porte, de son côté, notifie aux Puissances Signataires du Protocole la déclaration suivante :—

1. Adoptant envers le Monténégro la même ligne de conduite qui a amené la pacification de la Serbie, la Sublime Porte avait fait connaître spontanément au Prince, il y a déjà deux mois, qu'elle ne s'épargnerait aucun effort pour arriver à une entente avec lui, même au prix de certains sacrifices ; considérant le Monténégro comme faisant partie intégrante du territoire Ottoman, elle a proposé une rectification de la ligne de démarcation qui assure au Monténégro des avantages, et il dépend désormais entièrement des conseils de modération qui prévaudront, la Sublime Porte aime à l'espérer, à Cettigné que cette affaire soit considérée comme terminée.

2. Le Gouvernement Impérial est prêt à mettre en application toutes les réformes promises ; mais ces réformes, conformément aux dispositions fondamentales de notre Constitution, ne sauraient avoir un caractère spécial et exclusif ; et c'est dans cet esprit que le Gouvernement Impérial persévéra dans sa pleine et entière liberté à la mise en application de ses institutions.

3. Le Gouvernement Impérial est prêt à remettre ses armées sur le pied de paix, aussitôt qu'il verra que le Gouvernement Russe prend des mesures dans le même but ; les armements de la Turquie ont un caractère exclusivement défensif, et les relations d'amitié et d'estime qui unissent les deux Empires font espérer que le Cabinet de St. Pétersbourg ne persistera pas seul en Europe dans la pensée que les populations Chrétiennes en Turquie soient exposées de la part de leur propre Gouvernement à des dangers tels qu'il soit nécessaire d'accumuler contre un Etat ami et voisin tous les moyens d'invasion et de destruction.

4. Pour ce qui est des désordres qui pourraient éclater en Turquie et arrêter la démobilisation de l'armée Russe, le Gouvernement Impérial, qui repousse les termes blessants dans lesquels cette pensée a été exprimée, croit que l'Europe est convaincue que les désordres qui ont troublé le repos des provinces étaient dus à des excitations venues du dehors, que le Gouvernement Impérial n'en saurait être tenu responsable, et que, dès lors, le Gouvernement Russe aussi ne serait pas justifié à faire dépendre la démobilisation de ses armées de pareilles éventualités.

5. Quant à l'envoi à St. Pétersbourg d'un Envoyé Spécial chargé de traiter du désarmement, le Gouvernement Impérial, qui n'aurait aucune raison de se refuser à un acte de courtoisie que les convenances diplomatiques imposent à charge de réciprocité, ne voit aucune connexité entre cet acte de courtoisie internationale et le désarmement, qui ne saurait être retardé pour aucun motif plausible, et qui pourrait être effectué sur un simple ordre par télégraphe.

En faisant parvenir les déclarations qui précèdent aux Cabinets Signataires, la Sublime Porte les prie d'en prendre acte, d'apprécier l'esprit qui les a dictées, et de vouloir bien y attacher l'importance à laquelle elles ont droit dans la situation présente, situation dont le Gouvernement Impérial ne saurait trop proclamer les dangers, et dont il décline formellement la responsabilité.

A la suite de ce qui vient d'être exposé plus haut sur les efforts que le Gouvernement Impérial a consacrés au rétablissement de la tranquillité, aussi bien que sur les causes qui en ont réellement prévenu les effets, les Cabinets Signataires du Protocole du 31 Mars n'auront pas de peine à se rendre compte du sentiment pénible que ce document ne pouvait manquer de produire sur le Gouvernement Impérial.

Il serait inutile de revenir ici sur les passages du Protocole relatifs aux deux Principautés et à la question du désarmement.

Mais ce qu'on ne saurait réellement assez regretter, c'est le peu de cas que les Puissances semblent avoir fait aussi bien des grands principes d'égalité et de justice que le Gouvernement Impérial cherche à faire prévaloir dans l'administration intérieure, que de ses droits d'indépendance et de souveraineté.

Il y a lieu de s'étonner en effet que dans ce Protocole les Puissances amies aient jugé nécessaire d'affirmer de nouveau "l'intérêt commun qu'elles prennent aux réformes à introduire en Bosnie, Herzégovine, et Bulgarie, que la Porte a acceptées sauf à les appliquer elle-même ;" d'inviter la Porte à mettre en "œuvre dans le plus court délai possible les réformes à l'état des provinces dont la Conférence s'est préoccupée ; d'exprimer l'espoir que la Porte prendra avec énergie les mesures destinées à apporter à la condition des populations Chrétiennes l'amélioration effective

unanimentement réclamée, et qu'une fois entrée dans cette voie elle comprendra qu'il est de son honneur, comme de son intérêt, d'y persévérer loyalement et efficacement."

La Sublime Porte n'a pas accepté de réformes spéciales à la Bosnie, à l'Herzégovine, et aux localités habitées par des Bulgares.

Elle n'en est pas à douter qu'il est bien de son intérêt et de son devoir de satisfaire aux droits légitimes de ses sujets Chrétiens; elle ne saurait admettre que les améliorations qui lui sont recommandées doivent s'adresser exclusivement à l'élément Chrétien. Au lendemain des preuves de loyauté et de dévouement que tous les sujets de Sa Majesté ont données, et en présence de réformes qui tendent à unir toutes les populations de l'Empire en un seul corps politique, la Sublime Porte se doit à elle-même de repousser la suspicion que les expressions du Protocole voudraient jeter sur la sincérité de ses sentiments envers ses sujets Chrétiens, et, en outre, de réclamer contre l'indifférence, tout au moins, dont ces mêmes expressions témoignent à l'égard de ses sujets Musulmans et autres. Il n'est pas admissible que les améliorations tendant à assurer aux Musulmans aussi la tranquillité et le bien-être soient, aux yeux de l'Europe éclairée, tolérante et juste, dépourvues de toute importance. Des mesures ou plutôt des institutions propres à assurer à tous et partout également le libre développement moral et matériel des droits de chacun, c'est là le but que la Turquie se propose aujourd'hui; elle tiendra à honneur de persévérer dans cette voie; la Constitution en est la meilleure et plus sûre garantie.

Mais, si le Gouvernement Impérial se voit réduit à repousser toute idée par laquelle on essaierait de semer des germes d'antagonisme entre les divers éléments de ses populations et d'inspirer la méfiance de quelques unes d'entre elles vis-à-vis de leurs autorités légitimes, il ne saurait non plus souscrire, à aucun titre, à la sanction que le Protocole a entendu donner à l'application des améliorations ci-dessus énoncées. Ainsi, lorsque le Protocole dit que "les Puissances se proposent de veiller avec soin et par l'intermédiaire de leurs Représentants à Constantinople et de leurs Agents locaux à la façon dont les promesses du Gouvernement Ottoman seront exécutées," lorsqu'il ajoute "que, si cet espoir se trouvait encore une fois déçu, elles se réservent d'aviser en commun aux moyens qu'elles jugeront les plus propres à assurer le bien-être des Chrétiens et les intérêts de la paix générale," il est évident qu'il doit provoquer les protestations les plus légitimes du Gouvernement Impérial et son opposition la plus formelle. La Turquie, en sa qualité d'Etat indépendant, ne saurait se reconnaître comme placée sous aucune surveillance collective ou non. Entretenant avec les autres Etats amis des relations réglées par le droit des gens et les Traités, elle ne peut reconnaître aux Agents ou Représentants étrangers, chargés de protéger les intérêts de leurs nationaux, la mission de surveillance officielle. Le Gouvernement Impérial ne voit pas enfin en quoi il aurait démérité de la justice et de la civilisation au point de se voir faire une position humiliante et sans exemple dans le monde.

Le Traité de Paris a explicitement consacré le principe de non-intervention. Ce Traité, qui lie les Puissances qui y ont pris part aussi bien que la Turquie, ne saurait être aboli par un Protocole auquel la Turquie n'a pas co-opéré.

Et, si la Turquie en appelle aux stipulations du Traité de Paris, ce n'est pas parce que ce Traité aurait créé en sa faveur quelques droits qu'elle n'aurait pas sans ce Traité, mais bien pour rappeler les graves raisons qui dans l'intérêt de la paix générale de l'Europe avaient amené les Puissances, il y a vingt ans, à placer sous la garantie d'une promesse collective la reconnaissance de l'inviolabilité du droit de souveraineté de cet Empire. Quant à la clause qui, en cas d'inexécution des réformes promises, voudrait attribuer aux Puissances le droit d'aviser aux mesures ultérieures, le Gouvernement Impérial y voit une atteinte de plus à sa dignité et à ses droits, un procédé d'intimidation destiné à priver de toute mérite de spontanéité ses propres actes, et la source de graves complications pour le présent aussi bien que pour l'avenir.

Aucune considération ne saurait donc arrêter le Gouvernement Impérial dans sa résolution de protester contre les énonciations du Protocole du 31 Mars et de le considérer, pour ce qui concerne la Turquie, comme dépourvu de toute équité et par conséquent aussi de tout caractère obligatoire.

En butte à des suggestions hostiles, à des soupçons immérités, et à des violations manifestes de ses droits qui sont en même temps des violations du droit des gens, la Turquie sent qu'elle lutte aujourd'hui pour son existence.

Forte de la justice de sa cause et confiante en Dieu, elle déclare ignorer ce qui a pu être décidé sans elle et contre elle: décidée à conserver dans le monde la place que la Providence lui a destinée à cet égard, elle ne cessera d'opposer aux attaques qui sont dirigées contre elle les principes généraux du droit public et l'autorité d'un grand acte Européen qui engage l'honneur des Puissances Signataires du Protocole du

31 Mars, lequel n'a pas d'exigibilité légale à ses yeux ; elle en appelle à la conscience des Cabinets qu'elle est en droit de croire animés envers elle des mêmes sentiments de haute équité et d'amitié que par le passé. Le désarmement immédiat et simultané serait le seul moyen efficace de conjurer les dangers dont on menace la paix générale.

La réponse que le Gouvernement Impérial vient de faire plus haut à la déclaration de M. l'Ambassadeur de Russie offre aux Puissances les éléments propres à amener ce résultat, que bien certainement elles ne voudront pas chercher à obtenir en persistant à imposer à l'Empire Ottoman des sacrifices de droit et d'honneur auxquels il ne consentira pas.

Vous êtes chargé de donner lecture de ce Mémoire à M. le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères et d'en laisser copie à son Excellence.

Doc. 612
(No. 243.)

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Jocelyn.

Sir,

Foreign Office, April 12, 1877.

THE Turkish Ambassador called upon me to-day and left with me a copy of a Circular despatch addressed by his Government to their Representatives, on the subject of the Protocol of the 31st March and of the Declarations by which that instrument was accompanied.

Having read this document, I expressed to his Excellency my deep regret at the view which the Porte had taken of a proceeding the principal object of which had been to extricate Turkey from a position of extreme embarrassment and danger. I thought it unnecessary to enter on any further discussion of a step which had been adopted by the Porte after full consideration, and which could not now be retraced. I said, however, that it did not seem to me clear, from the language of the despatch which he had placed in my hands, whether the Porte would or would not consent to send an Ambassador to St. Petersburg to treat on the question of mutual disarmament.

Musurus Pasha stated that his Government were not prepared to adopt any such measure, and he further expressed an opinion that matters could not be settled in a satisfactory manner unless the Powers consented to annul the Protocol.

I pointed out in reply, that the divergence between the views of our two Governments appeared so wide as to render discussion useless, and I said I did not see what further steps Her Majesty's Government could take to avert a war which appeared to have become inevitable.

The Turkish Ambassador answered that the attitude of his Government was simply defensive, that they did not desire war, but that they would prefer it to the sacrifice of national independence, which appeared to them to be involved in the acceptance of the Protocol.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 613

Mr. Monson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 13.)

(Telegraphic.)

Cettigné, April 13, 1877, 5 P.M.

MONTENEGRIN Delegates telegraph that the Porte categorically refuses all their demands and that they will take formal leave to-morrow, and that for Odessa and Vienna on Monday the 16th.

They add that Prince Nicholas may expect to be attacked immediately on the side of Nischich. Grand Vizier telegraphs to Prince that the negotiations are broken off, and that there is to be no more prolongation of armistice nor suspension of hostilities.

I do not think the Turks are in a position to attack with advantage, and I believe that all the necessary precautions have been taken by the Montenegrins.

Doc. 614

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 13.)

(Telegraphic.)

St. Petersburg, April 13, 1877, 7.47 P.M.

TURKISH Circular answer to Protocol was communicated here yesterday. It is regarded as a rejection of all the proposals and closing the door to any further negotia-

tions. I believe that Imperial decision is taken, but will not be published until previous reference to European Powers. War is thought to be inevitable, but it is generally deplored.

Doc. 615 *Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received April 13.)

(Telegraphic.)

Tiflis, April 13, 1877.

TWO batteries and 1 battalion gone to Ozozurt; 2 batteries gone to frontier from Suram; 1,000 Tartar militia gone to Alexandropol; 38th and 20th divisions not arrived; I do not think they can reach frontier before 25th. Daghistan reported in revolt. Reported Russians are drawing troops from Kischeneff to make main attack from Caucasus. I cannot answer for truth of this report, but inquiry might be made from Odessa.

Doc. 616 *Musurus Pasha to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received April 13.)

My Lord,

Ambassade Impériale Ottomane, Londres, le 13 Avril, 1877.

JE m'empresse de communiquer à votre Excellence la copie ci-jointe d'une dépêche télégraphique que je reçois à l'instant de son Excellence Safvet Pacha, et qui contient celle que son Altesse le Grand Vizir vient d'adresser au Prince du Monténégro pour constater l'expiration de l'armistice.

Votre, &c.
(Signé) MUSURUS.

Doc. 617 *Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.*

(Télégraphique.)

Constantinople, le 13 Avril, 1877.

LA Sublime Porte vient d'adresser au Prince du Monténégro le télégramme suivant :—

“L'armistice arrêté entre le Gouvernement Impérial et la Principauté du Monténégro a expiré aujourd'hui. Les négociations pour amener le rétablissement de la paix étant malheureusement restées sans résultat, je crois devoir prévenir votre Altesse que la Sublime Porte a décidé que la suspension d'armes ne serait ni renouvelée ni prolongée.”

Doc. 618 *Consul Sir C. Sebright to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received April 21.)

(No. 2. Political. Private and Confidential.)

My Lord,

Corfu, April 17, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to transmit, for your Lordship's information, a copy of a secret report received this morning respecting the intrigues on foot for exciting disturbances in Albania.

I received some hints from Athens, now a fortnight ago, that attempts were on foot to excite a revolt in the neighbouring Turkish province, of which Corfu was the centre; but which, in common with my Ottoman colleague, I was, and am persuaded was not the case. But that Russian emissaries are actively at work in this bad cause I can now no longer doubt, and in this sense I have by this mail reported to Her Majesty's Minister at Athens.

By the mail of the 19th instant, I shall take leave to communicate further with your Lordship on this subject.

Being ignorant of the line of policy which Her Majesty's Government might see fit to pursue in the event of successful attempts to excite an insurrection within Turkish territory, I do not venture to ask for the presence of a ship-of-war from the squadron now at Malta, and leave it to your Lordship to give orders in this matter should it be deemed expedient.

I cannot, however, refrain from giving utterance to my very decided conviction that should the Russian Agents succeed in exciting a revolt in Epirus, we shall have a repetition

of the bloody scenes in Bulgaria which have caused such horror and indignation throughout the length and breadth of the civilized world.

With, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES SEBRIGHT.

Doc. 619

Inclosure in Doc. 618.

Secret Report received by Consul Sir C. Sebright.

Corfu, le 17 Avril, 1877.

LE semaine dernière un voyageur débarqué du bateau Dalmato-Albanais du Lloyd Autrichien arriva à l'Hôtel d'Angleterre et y prit logement. La taille haute, élancée, et le type militaire de ce voyageur, qui était évidemment un homme du Nord, éveilla mon attention; mais ce fut l'étrangeté de son escorte qui fixa mon intérêt, car elle se composait de quelques Epirotes en costume national et à la figure hardie.

Ce Monsieur s'inscrivit sous le nom de Becker, rentier, provenance illisible.

Je fis surveiller ces accointances; elles accrurent mes soupçons. Il fut hauté par un Sieur Croni, membre du Comité Ionien pour l'Epire et l'Herzégovine, et le Vice-Consul Hellénique à Santi Guaranta, dont j'avais remarqué la participation bruyante à la mise en scène du plébiscite provoqué l'année dernière d'après l'exemple de Zante, dans l'intention de pousser le Gouvernement dans la voie d'action préconisée par la jeune Grèce.

M. Becker partit par le bateau Italien d'hier pour le Pirée, après avoir déjeuné à l'hôtel avec le Vice-Consul susnommé, qui s'appelle Barca.

Or, on avait dit très-sérieusement à la personne qui me le référa que ce vrai, on prétendu Becker ne fut autre que le Chef d'Etat Major du Général Tcherniaieff; qu'il revenait d'Albanie et d'Epire, et qu'il affirmait que l'insurrection était prête à éclater de nouveau, ayant à sa disposition cette foie des armes, des munitions et des fonds qui en garantissaient le succès.

Cette révélation toutefois ayant été faite par un Grec à un Grec le 1^{er} Avril (v.s.) je hésitai de la porter à la connaissance de mon Gouvernement. Cependant en considérant que ce Consulat-Général Ottoman, ainsi qu'il me constate positivement, avait été informé officiellement ou officieusement que des émissaires dirigés sur l'Albanie et l'Epire allaient ré-apparaître à Corfou; en considérant que réellement ces jours-ci des figures étrangères rodaient autour dans ces parages, je suis disposé à croire qu'il pourrait être d'une importance sérieuse d'y veiller.

Doc. 620

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 21.)

No. 295.)

My Lord,

Paris, April 20, 1877.

M. CALLIMAKI CATARGI (who appears to have been rather suddenly reappointed Roumanian Agent at Paris) came to me yesterday, and said that he was anxious to speak to me of the difficult position in which Roumania was placed by the imminence of war between Russia and Turkey.

There was, he said, reason to apprehend that the Turkish troops might seek immediately to occupy Kalafat and other advantageous military positions in Roumania even before the Russians crossed the Pruth. In this case the Roumanian forces would be bound to resist them, and thus Roumania might be placed in the embarrassing and disadvantageous position of having fired the first shot in the war. He was, therefore, directed by his Government to beseech the Governments of France and England to intervene at Constantinople in order to prevent any violation of the Roumanian territory by the Turks.

He had, he said, already spoken to the Duc Decazes, and received from him a promise that he would communicate with Her Majesty's Government on the subject.

I asked M. Callimaki Catargi what course the Roumanian Government would take if the Russian forces were to be the first to enter its territory.

He answered that the cases were very different; that there was no natural frontier between Russia and Roumania, such as was formed by the Danube on the Turkish side; and that it would be simply impossible to offer any resistance to the advance of the Russians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

Doc. 621

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 22.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, April 21, 1877.

WITH reference to your telegram of the 19th instant, and to Mr. Jocelyn's despatch No. 253 of the 3rd instant, I have informed Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs that Her Majesty's Government are prepared to offer their good offices to arrange differences between Turkey and Persia. His Excellency assures me that he does not apprehend any difficulties between the two countries. He has agreed to send a Commissioner to Medina to inquire into alleged outrages upon Persian subjects, and to punish those who are proved guilty of them. The only question that remains is the removal of the brother of the Shah from Bagdad. Porte has invited the Prince to Constantinople, and the Persian Government have expressed their willingness to agree to this arrangement. I have telegraphed to Consul-General to use his influence to induce the Prince to accept the invitation. Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs states to me that he has received the most positive assurances from Persian Government that there is no secret Treaty between Persia and Russia, and that the Shah could not assist Russia in an attack upon Turkey without violating the religious sentiments of his people. His Excellency attaches little importance to the military resources of Persia, and does not apprehend any attack on her part on the Bagdad frontier.

Doc. 622

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 22.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, April 21, 1877.

I HAVE just seen Minister for Foreign Affairs. I have urged upon him in the strongest manner the importance of making a further attempt to avoid war, using the same arguments and making the same suggestions as in the interview with the Grand Vizier, referred to in my telegram of this morning.

I found that the Grand Vizier had already seen Minister for Foreign Affairs, and had informed him of what had passed between us last night.

It appears to me that there is a disposition to take the step mentioned in my telegram, viz., a last appeal to the Powers for mediation.

A Council will probably be held on the subject immediately, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs has promised to see me as soon as a decision is come to; I should therefore be very glad to have your Lordship's views on the subject.

I found his Excellency very apprehensive of a sudden attack on Batoum. He stated that he had received information that Prince Charles of Roumania, accompanied by Russian officers, was about to superintend measures to be taken for the defence of Kalafat.

Doc. 623

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 22.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, April 21, 1877.

I HAVE reason to believe that the language I have held to the Grand Vizier and the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs has had some effect. I am assured that at a Council to-day the idea of making a last appeal to the Powers under the VIIIth Article of the Treaty of Paris was favourably entertained, and that war party is losing ground.

It would be of the greatest importance if I could suggest to the Turkish Government, with the authority of Her Majesty's Government, some course which might possibly be accepted by Russia, and induce her to suspend hostilities; but no time should be lost in doing so. Russian Chargé d'Affaires tells me that he has not yet had orders to leave Constantinople, but expects to receive them in the course of next week.

Doc. 624

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 22.)

(Telegraphic.)

Rome, April 22, 1877.

THE Italian Government will willingly take part with the other Powers in mediation, if it is asked for by the Porte and accepted by Russia.

Doc. 625 *Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 22.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, April 22, 1877.

I HAVE acquainted Minister for Foreign Affairs with your Lordship's answer to Mr. Layard's telegram of yesterday as to an appeal by the Porte to the VIIIth Article of the Treaty of Paris. His Excellency sees no probability of mediation being accepted by Russia, as he himself suggested at St. Petersburg on the 18th instant, that negotiations might be renewed if the Porte would send Envoy to compliment Emperor Alexander on his arrival at Kischeneff, as would have been done under normal circumstances, and who should have power to negotiate an amicable arrangement of the question at issue between the two Governments; but Prince Gortchakow answered that Italian Government had already made abortive attempt at Constantinople to bring about a mediation, that it was now too late, and that Russian Manifesto had been despatched.

Doc. 626

*The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.**

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, April 22, 1877, 11.30 P.M.

IF, as appears from the statement of the Italian Chargé d'Affaires, reported in your telegram, there is reason to believe that the mission of an Ambassador from the Porte to meet the Emperor of Russia would be acceptable to Russia, the Porte would be well-advised to send one, and to let Russian Government know at once.

My telegram of yesterday will have informed you of views of Her Majesty's Government as to appealing to VIIIth Article of Treaty of Paris.

I have asked Lord A. Loftus if he knows of any course which would be accepted by Russia.

Doc. 627 *Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 23.)*

(No. 152.)

My Lord,

Berlin, April 19, 1877.

WITH reference to previous correspondence respecting the condition of the Jews in Roumania, I understand that the German Government have invited the Roumanian Government to deal with the German Jews as with other German subjects, irrespective of creed or religious difference, and to admit them to equal rights in the future.

Under present circumstances, the Roumanian Government will scarcely be able to do justice to this suggestion.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 628 *Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 23.)*

(No. 153. Very Confidential.)

My Lord,

Berlin, April 20, 1877.

THE semi-official "Provinzial Correspondenz" publishes the inclosed article on the prospects of the Turco-Russian war, and concludes that, if it can no longer be put off, "the Powers will no doubt use their best efforts to prevent the war from taking any larger extention."

I have been confidentially informed, on the best authority, that the Emperor has said to his Generals that if he could follow his impulses and act up to his conviction, he would materially assist his nephew the Czar and the cause of Christianity against the infidel Turk, but that he is bound for the present to adopt Prince Bismarck's opinions, who insists on the necessity of the neutrality of Germany—an opinion which, His Majesty adds, he personally looks upon as mistaken and ungenerous.

To judge from the general exultation in Berlin, from the Emperor to the youngest cadet, the war is really popular, and the hope that this time, at last, the Turk may be driven out of Europe and the Oriental question closed for ever, is openly and earnestly expressed even by persons in the most responsible positions.

Any attempt at the present moment to assist Turkey against Russia would be deeply resented by public opinion in Germany.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 629

Inclosure in Doc. 628.

Extract from the "Correspondance Provinciale" of April 20, 1877.

LA question d'Orient est entrée dans une nouvelle phase décisive.

La Turquie a rejeté avec raideur les demandes des Puissances, exposées dans le Protocole de Londres du 31 Mars. Dans une Circulaire du Ministre Turc des Affaires Etrangères, en date du 9 Avril, la démarche des Puissances est qualifiée d'acte tout-à-fait injustifié et d'atteinte à la dignité et aux droits de la Turquie. Il est dit: qu'aucune considération ne saurait décider le Gouvernement Turc à se départir de sa résistance aux demandes du Protocole et l'empêcher de déclarer qu'il regarde cet acte diplomatique comme injuste au plus haut point et partant comme dénué de tout caractère obligatoire; que, dans sa résistance à des exigences hostiles, à des suspicions non justifiées, à des atteintes ouvertement portées à ses droits, la Turquie sent bien qu'elle a devant elle une lutte pour son existence.

Vis-à-vis de cette déclaration c'est évanoui tout espoir que des négociations ultérieures puissent réussir.

En même temps des nouvelles sont arrivées de St. Pétersbourg et de Constantinople d'après lesquelles, du côté de la Russie, comme du côté de la Turquie, on se prépare en vue de la déclaration imminente des hostilités.

De St. Pétersbourg on mande que la Russie se voit forcée à agir par la situation actuelle; que la Turquie veut le conflit et pousse à la guerre; qu'en refusant aux Puissances Européennes le droit et la possibilité de réclamer et de garantir aucune réforme intérieure en faveur des Chrétiens de Turquie, la Porte a créé une situation complètement nouvelle; que la Russie a pendant cinq mois donné des preuves de ses intentions pacifiques; que la Turquie, au contraire, a repoussé toutes les occasions offertes de donner aux choses une tournure pacifique, qu'elle pousse à une décision par les armes; que la Russie, étant sous les armes, ne peut plus reculer.

Le départ de l'Empereur de Russie pour se rendre auprès de son armée, est fixé, dit-on, au 20 Avril.

Si la déclaration de la guerre entre la Russie et la Turquie ne peut plus ainsi être retardée, le commun effort pacifique des Puissances Européennes n'aura sans doute que plus résolument pour but d'empêcher de toute façon que la guerre ne prenne aucune extension plus grande.

Doc. 630

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 23, 5:30 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)

Bucharest, April 23, 1877, 3:20 P.M.

THIRD battalion of Russian brigade of railway service arrives at Jassy to-day. Turkish monitors are in position at bridge at Barbosh. Passage of the Pruth in force probable for to-morrow.

Doc. 631

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 23.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, April 23, 1877.

I READ to-day to the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs a Memorandum on the present situation at Constantinople which I drew up from your telegrams of yesterday received this morning. He doubted the Italian proposal having been made with the sanction of Russia, and fears that unless immediate action has now been (? taken) by the Porte, the previous publication of a manifesto may prevent a Turkish Envoy being received by the Emperor Alexander. I said if the concessions of the Porte are complete, Russia could hardly put herself in the wrong by refusing them; and he answered that although Minister for Foreign Affairs would certainly do anything in his power to

(? prevent) war, his Excellency fears that time is now too short for successful peace-making.

A Russian courier passed through Vienna this morning on his way to Italy, but the Ambassadors have not yet received Russian (? Circular).

Doc. 632 Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 23.)

(Telegraphic.)

Berlin, April 23, 1877.

I HAVE communicated the substance of your Lordship's telegrams of yesterday to Minister for Foreign Affairs. His Excellency says that the German Government will gladly co-operate with Her Majesty's Government and the other Powers if the Porte make the appeal announced by Mr. Layard, but it should be made at once before it is too late.

Doc. 633 The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 140. Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, April 23, 1877.

THE Austrian Ambassador called upon me this afternoon and read to me confidentially a telegram which he had received from Count Andrassy, repeating the substance of a report from the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople of the 21st instant.

It would appear that Safvet Pasha, after Mr. Layard's interview with him on that day, had stated that Mr. Layard had brought nothing but good wishes without making any promise, and that he had not suggested any means of escape from existing difficulties.

The question of the expulsion of Russian subjects from the Ottoman dominions, and that of the blockade of the Russian ports, were to be discussed to-day in the Council of Ministers.

The Russian Chargé d'Affaires added that Safvet Pasha complained of the disagreement which existed among the Ministers.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 634 The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 141. Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, April 23, 1877.

THE Austrian Ambassador told me confidentially this afternoon the substance of a telegram which he had received from Count Andrassy reporting the conversation you had had with his Excellency, of which an account is also given in your telegraphic despatch of yesterday.

Count Andrassy stated that you had informed him of Mr. Layard's interview with the Grand Vizier, and had said that the latter had declared war to be inevitable unless the Powers made an attempt to bring about an arrangement under the VIIIth Article of the Treaty of Paris; in which case Turkey would consent to disarm. That you had further informed him that Her Majesty's Government would be willing to join in such a step if the other Powers were disposed to do so, and Russia would consent.

Count Andrassy said that he had told you in reply that he had confidentially sounded the Russian Government some days ago, as to the possibility of an arrangement being come to, if the Powers advised the Porte to send an Ambassador on a complimentary mission to meet the Emperor at Kischeneff, giving such Ambassador power to treat the question of disarmament; but that Prince Gortchakow had replied that it was too late, and that such advice would have no chance of being accepted.

Under these circumstances Count Andrassy says that he fears a mediation on the basis of the VIIIth Article of the Treaty of Paris would not only have no satisfactory result, but might occasion differences of opinion among the Governments concerned which would tend to interfere with the localisation of the war.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 635 Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 23, night.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, April 23, 1877, 4.15 P.M.

I HAVE just seen Russian Chargé d'Affaires, who informs me that he will address this afternoon, by order of his Government, a note to the Porte to the effect that all attempts of the Russian Government in accord with the Powers to bring about a solution of the pending difficulties having failed, he is directed to suspend diplomatic relations with the Turkish Government, and that he will leave Constantinople with the Embassy this afternoon. He added that he would tell me confidentially that he was instructed not to make any allusion to war. He expresses his personal opinion that there is no reason to apprehend immediate hostilities. The Emperor, he said, was paying a visit to his army at Kischeneff, and would probably continue his tour in other parts of Southern Russia.

I pressed him to give me his idea of what Russia might expect. He said, that without having any authority whatever to express an opinion, it seemed to him not impossible that if the Porte sent an Ambassador to meet the Emperor, who would state that Turkey accepted the Protocol of London, such a step might lead to some result; but he was by no means certain that it would.

On the whole, I judge from his language that Russia is still wavering. He told me that he should see the Emperor in a couple of days, and that he would inform him of my earnest desire to bring about a peaceful solution. I am doing all that I possibly can in every direction in the interest of peace.

The Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs prepared the day before yesterday, after my interview with him, a Circular to the Powers, which, I am assured, was of a conciliatory character, but unfortunately warlike counsels prevailed, and it was decided at the Council not to send it. It was proposed instead to appeal to the Parties to the Tripartite Treaty to afford Turkey armed assistance, and to call upon Prince Charles categorically to declare his intentions with regard to the Porte, but no decision has yet, I believe, been come to.

I am to see the Sultan to-morrow, and I have hopes that the influence I have been able to bring to bear upon him has produced a favourable impression; but there are persons in the Palace who are doing their utmost to counteract it, and to induce him to precipitate the country into war.

Doc. 636 Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 23, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

St. Petersburg, April 23, 1877.

I HAVE just seen Prince Gortchakow.

His Highness, in reply to my inquiry in regard to any possible means of averting war, stated that it was too late, as the Russian troops were on the eve of marching.

He observed in regard to appeal to VIIIth Article of Treaty of Paris, that it had been already exhausted by Protocol of London, and he considered the Turkish Circular in reply to it as a declaration of war. His Highness added that sending an Ambassador to Kischeneff was useless, as the Porte was unable to make any suitable offer after its attitude and that of the Chamber in regard to the Protocol.

I gathered from his Highness' language that nothing short of an abject submission on the part of the Porte could avert hostilities.

An idea is prevalent here that the Porte, from a want of funds, cannot disband its army without danger to the country.

Doc. 637

Prince Gortchakow to Count Schouvaloff.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Count Schouvaloff, April 24.)

(Circulaire.)

M. l'Ambassadeur,

St. Pétersbourg, le 17^e Avril, 1877.

LE Cabinet Impérial a épuisé, depuis l'origine de la crise Orientale, tous les moyens en son pouvoir afin d'amener, avec le concours des Grandes Puissances de l'Europe, une pacification durable de la Turquie.

Toutes les propositions successivement faites à la Porte à la suite de l'entente établie entre les Cabinets ont rencontré de sa part une résistance invincible.

Le Protocole signé à Londres le $\frac{1}{31}$ Mars de cette année a été la dernière expression de la volonté collective de l'Europe.

Le Cabinet Impérial l'avait suggéré comme une tentative suprême de conciliation. Il avait fait connaître, par la déclaration portant la même date et accompagnant le Protocole, les conditions qui, loyalement et sincèrement acceptées et exécutées par le Gouvernement Ottoman, pouvaient amener le rétablissement et la consolidation de la paix.

La Porte vient d'y répondre par un nouveau refus.

Cette éventualité n'avait pas été envisagée par le Protocole de Londres. En formulant les vœux et les décisions de l'Europe, il s'était borné à stipuler que dans le cas où les Grandes Puissances seraient déçues dans leur espoir de voir la Porte appliquer avec énergie les mesures destinées à apporter à la condition des populations Chrétiennes l'amélioration unanimement réclamée comme indispensable à la tranquillité de l'Europe, elles se réserveraient d'aviser en commun aux moyens qu'elles jugeraient les plus propres à assurer le bien-être de ces populations et les intérêts de la paix générale.

Ainsi les Cabinets avaient prévu le cas où la Porte ne remplirait pas les promesses qu'elle aurait faites, mais non celui où elle rejetterait les demandes de l'Europe.

En même temps la déclaration faite par Lord Derby à la suite du Protocole a constaté que, comme le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique n'avait consenti à la signature de cet acte qu'en vue des intérêts de la paix générale, il devait être entendu d'avance que dans le cas où le but proposé ne serait pas atteint, et notamment le désarmement réciproque et la paix entre la Russie et la Turquie, le Protocole serait considéré comme nul et sans valeur.

Le refus de la Porte et les motifs sur lesquels il est fondé ne laissent subsister aucun espoir d'une déference de sa part aux vœux et aux conseils de l'Europe, ni aucune garantie de l'application des réformes suggérées pour l'amélioration du sort des populations Chrétiennes ; ils rendent impossibles la paix avec le Monténégro et l'exécution des conditions qui pouvaient amener le désarmement et la pacification. Dans ces conjonctures, toute chance est fermée aux tentatives de conciliation. Il ne reste d'autre alternative que de laisser se prolonger l'état de choses que les Puissances ont déclaré incompatible avec leurs intérêts et ceux de l'Europe en général, ou bien de chercher à obtenir par la coercition ce que les efforts unanimes des Cabinets n'ont pas réussi à obtenir de la Porte par la persuasion.

Notre auguste Maître a résolu d'entreprendre cette œuvre, que Sa Majesté avait convié les Grandes Puissances à poursuivre en commun avec elle.

Elle a donné à ses armées l'ordre de franchir les frontières de la Turquie.

Veuillez porter cette résolution à la connaissance du Gouvernement auprès duquel vous êtes accrédité.

En assumant cette tâche, notre auguste Maître remplit un devoir qui lui est imposé par les intérêts de la Russie dont le développement pacifique est entravé par les troubles permanents de l'Orient. Sa Majesté Impériale a la conviction de répondre en même temps aux sentiments et aux intérêts de l'Europe.

Recevez, &c.
(Signé) GORTCHAKOW.

Doc. 638

The Earl of Derby to Her Majesty's Representatives in Europe, Tehran, and Washington, and to Her Majesty's Consuls at Belgrade, Bucharest, Cairo, and Cettigné.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, April 24, 1877, 6 P.M.

I HAVE received to-day from the Russian Ambassador the Russian Circular.

It refers at length to the Protocol as having been suggested by Russia as a last attempt at conciliation.

The refusal of the Protocol by the Porte leaves no hope of Turkey deferring to the wishes of Europe, or any guarantee for application of reforms.

Nothing remains except to let this state of things continue, or to obtain by force what the Powers have failed to obtain by persuasion.

The Russian armies are ordered to cross the Turkish frontier. In assuming this task, the Emperor fulfils a duty which is imposed on him by the interests of Russia, whose pacific development is injuriously affected by the continual troubles of the East.

Doc. 639 Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 26, night.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Very Confidential.)

St. Petersburg, April 26, 1877, 9 P.M.

I THINK it my duty to inform your Lordship that the language held here by Russian society in general, although bearing no official character, leads to the supposition that it is intended to push on with concentrated force to Constantinople.

Doc. 640

The Earl of Derby to Count Schouvaloff.

M. l'Ambassadeur,

Foreign Office, May 6, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's letter of the 6th instant, in which you inform me that you are about to proceed to Russia on a short leave of absence.

As your Excellency will then doubtless have an opportunity of personally conferring with your Government, I take this occasion of placing before them some considerations of importance to the future good understanding between Great Britain and Russia.

Her Majesty's Government do not propose again to enter on the question of the justice or necessity of the present war; they have already expressed their views with regard to it, and further discussion would be unavailing. They have accepted the obligations which a state of war imposed upon them, and have lost no time in issuing a Proclamation of Neutrality. They, from the first, warned the Porte that it must not look to them for assistance, and they are determined to carry impartially into effect the policy thus announced, so long as Turkish interests alone are involved.

At the same time they think it right that there should be no misunderstanding as to their position and intentions. Should the war now in progress unfortunately spread, interests may be imperilled which they are equally bound and determined to defend, and it is desirable that they should make it clear, so far as at the outset of the war can be done, what the most prominent of those interests are.

Foremost among them is the necessity of keeping open, uninjured and uninterrupted, the communication between Europe and the East by the Suez Canal. An attempt to blockade or otherwise to interfere with the Canal or its approaches would be regarded by them as a menace to India, and as a grave injury to the commerce of the world. On both these grounds any such step—which they hope and fully believe there is no intention on the part of either belligerent to take—would be inconsistent with the maintenance by them of an attitude of passive neutrality.

The mercantile and financial interests of European nations are also so largely involved in Egypt that an attack on that country, or its occupation, even temporary, for purposes of war, could scarcely be regarded with unconcern by the neutral Powers, certainly not by England.

The vast importance of Constantinople, whether in a military, a political, or a commercial point of view, is too well understood to require explanation. It is, therefore, scarcely necessary to point out that Her Majesty's Government are not prepared to witness with indifference the passing into other hands than those of its present possessors, of a capital holding so peculiar and commanding a position.

The existing arrangements made under European sanction which regulate the navigation of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles appear to them wise and salutary, and there would be, in their judgment, serious objections to their alteration in any material particular.

Her Majesty's Government have thought it right thus frankly to indicate their views. The course of events might show that there were still other interests, as, for instance, on the Persian Gulf, which it would be their duty to protect; but they do not doubt that they will have sufficiently pointed out to your Excellency the limits within which they hope that the war may be confined, or at all events those within which they themselves would be prepared, so far as present circumstances allow of an opinion being formed, to maintain a policy of abstention and neutrality.

They feel confident that the Emperor of Russia will appreciate their desire to make their policy understood at the outset of the war, and thus to respond to the assurances given by His Imperial Majesty at Livadia, and published at your Excellency's request, when he pledged his word of honour that he had no intention of acquiring Constantinople, and that, if necessity should oblige him to occupy a portion of Bulgaria, it would only be provisionally, and until the peace and safety of the Christian population were secured.

Her Majesty's Government cannot better show their confidence in these declarations of His Imperial Majesty than by requesting your Excellency to be so good as to convey to the Emperor and the Russian Government the frank explanations of British policy which I have had the honour of thus offering to you.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 641 *Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 21.)*

(Telegraphic.)

St. Petersburg, May 21, 1877, 1 P.M.

PRINCE GORTCHAKOW begged me to-day to inform your Lordship that Emperor fully appreciated the frankness of the exposition of the views of Her Majesty's Government contained in your letter of the 6th instant to Count Schouvaloff.

Same frankness would be evinced in the answer which was preparing, and of which Count Schouvaloff would be bearer.

His Highness said that he should keep it completely secret, and not even communicate it to Austria or Germany, and added that Count Schouvaloff would leave for London a few days after the Emperor's departure on the 2nd of June.

(Very Confidential.)

It appears to me that the object of Prince Gortchakow is to lure England by delay into maintaining a passive attitude until it will be too late to prevent occupation of Constantinople by Russia.

Doc. 642 *Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 27.)*

(Telegraphic.)

(Confidential.)

St. Petersburg, May 27, 1877, 2.30 P.M.

RUSSIAN Ambassador at Vienna will arrive here to-night, and his report of the views of the Austrian Government will decide nature of the answer of the Russian Government to your Lordship's letter to Russian Ambassador in London.

I have had an interview with the Russian Ambassador to London this morning. He will leave on Sunday next for London, and he hopes that the answer (?) he will be able to give will be satisfactory to Her Majesty's Government. He considers that the Dardanelles question cannot be treated by Russia and Turkey alone; but in concert with Europe. He assured me that terms of future peace will be concerted with European Powers. As regards Roumanian independence, Russia, he says, disapproves it, and will take no steps in regard to it without European concert. I could perceive that doubts are entertained of Austria, and fears that England will be influenced by her as regards future organisation of Christian provinces of Turkey.

Doc. 643 *Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 28.)*

(No. 266. Most Confidential.)

My Lord,

St. Petersburg, May 23, 1877.

COUNT SCHOUVALOFF did me the honour to call on me on the 19th instant.

His Excellency stated that he had passed 24 hours with Prince Bismarck at Friedrichsruhe, and that nothing could be more satisfactory than the assurances he received from him on Eastern affairs, without stating of what nature, but adding "provided that they were fulfilled."

I imagine that they may have referred to the mouths of the Danube, for Count Schouvaloff observed that two years ago Prince Bismarck had stated to him that Germany had no interest whatever as regarded the mouths of the Danube, except in as far as this question affected Austria, and that so long as Austria and Russia were agreed, Germany would raise no objections.

Count Schouvaloff said that Prince Bismarck repeated to him the other day the same observations, and I suspect that the subject of their conversation may have referred to the strip of territory in Bessarabia ceded by Russia in 1856.

Count Schouvaloff then spoke on the subject of your Lordship's note to him previous to leaving London, and to the various points therein referred to.

He said that it had made no disagreeable impression on the mind of the Emperor, and he did not consider that there was any point on which the Russian Government could not give a satisfactory reply.

As regarded Egypt and the Suez Canal, there would be no hesitation in giving the most tranquillizing assurances to England.

With regard to the interests on the Persian Gulf, Count Schouvaloff also considered that in view of the assurances given by the Emperor, there could be no fear of any differences with England, and the same applied equally to Constantinople.

There was only one point on which a divergence of views might exist between the two Governments, and it was on that referring to the navigation of the Dardanelles.

He entered into no particulars as to the cause or motive for such divergence, and I merely surmise that he referred to the free passage of the Dardanelles to be claimed for Russian ships of war.

He seemed entirely to repudiate the idea of any territorial changes on the Asiatic frontier, and rejected any possibility of injury to British interests in that quarter.

I had a further conversation with Count Schouvaloff after dinner yesterday at my house.

His Excellency told me that he had been present at a meeting of the Ministers at the Winter Palace to consider the reply to be made to your Lordship's note, and he thought that it would be one satisfactory to Her Majesty's Government.

In the course of conversation I observed to him that it was undeniable that the position of Constantinople might be menaced the moment the Danube was passed by an invading army; but it was evident that, if a victorious army crossed the Balkan, it was impossible to say that it could be stopped within sight of the Turkish capital.

Count Schouvaloff denied any intention of going to Constantinople, and considered that it would be impossible to take any engagement which might fetter or restrain the military operations without the previous certainty that the Turks would consent to the terms of peace. Then, again, he observed, atrocities might occur south of the Balkan, or at Adrianople, which would render it necessary to afford succour to the Christian population; but he thought that the object of restricting the military operations might be obtained in another way. For instance, after some decisive engagement before crossing the Balkans, conditions of peace previously arranged with the European Powers might be offered to the Porte, and pressed on its acceptance with the whole weight of the other European Powers. He mentioned this as purely a personal opinion, and not that of his Government.

He stated that, in his opinion, if the Russian army crossed the Balkan, the Turkish Empire in Europe was gone; but, in saying so, he stated very categorically that the great wish of the Imperial Government was to maintain the Turkish Empire, and that it would be a sore embarrassment if it should be dissolved.

I rather suspect that certain conditions of a peace are being now discussed, and that possibly they will be intrusted to Count Schouvaloff as constituting in that form an engagement towards England for the safeguard of her interests, and as the means of inducing her to maintain a passive attitude.

Count Schouvaloff, however, said that nothing had yet been decided as to the reply to be given to your Lordship's note, which was still under consideration.

From information I have received from other quarters, I am convinced that the Russian Government will demand from Turkey, at the conclusion of peace, the free navigation for Russian ships of war through the Dardanelles.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Doc. 644 Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 28.)

(No. 267. Secret.)

My Lord,

St. Petersburg, May 23, 1877.

SINCE the European concert has been broken up by the declaration of war against Turkey by Russia, the Eastern question has entered on a new phase, the gravity of which, for the interests of Great Britain, cannot be overrated.

Vast armies have been put in movement in Europe and Asia, the enthusiasm of the Russian nation has been excited to the highest degree, and the Czar is proclaimed beforehand the "liberator" of the Christian populations in the East from the Turkish yoke.

The magnitude of the Russian armaments is in harmony with the magnitude of the object in view, which is the subjection of Turkey to Russian domination, and the reduction of the Ottoman Empire to a Russian province.

There can be no doubt that the "occupation," I will not say "acquisition," of Constantinople is the aim to which every Russian's thought is turned, and which, unless timely defensive measures are taken, will be realized at no distant date.

The solemn assurances given by the Emperor that he has no intention to "acquire" Constantinople does not preclude the possibility of a provisional occupation of that capital; and, although I place every confidence in the solemn professions of His Imperial Majesty, many incidents may happen in the course of the present war which may not only give a plausible excuse for his doing so, but may render it necessary for the protection of the Christian populations and the maintenance of public order.

In the present grave circumstances it is necessary that England should be prepared for all eventualities. She has vital interests in the East to defend, and cannot suffer that those interests should depend on assurances, however sincere, or on declarations however binding, the fulfilment of which is exposed to the uncertain chapter of incidents.

The experience of past months has fully proved that negotiations have hitherto only resulted in strengthening the policy of Russia as regards the East, and whilst the Cabinets of Europe have been engaged in endeavouring to arrive at a pacific solution of the Eastern complications, Russia has been occupied in assembling and preparing vast armies for the conflict which she had pre-determined, and for the realisation of those ambitious designs which for years past have been the aim of her Government. She has assiduously and skilfully induced Europe to believe in her pacific intentions, and, even up to the signature of the London Protocol, buoyed herself with the hope that she had at last obtained an European sanction to be the executor of the will of Europe.

It cannot be denied that the policy of Austria and Germany, more especially of the latter, has greatly contributed to encourage Russia in the line of policy she has pursued.

Count Andrassy, in the very difficult position which Austria holds, has never had the firmness to resist the proposed Russian armed intervention, and Prince Bismarck, on the other hand, has done everything in his power to encourage it. I very much doubt whether either of these Powers would take any decisive measures to arrest the Russian army at the Balkans, or would interfere in the event of its marching on Constantinople.

Austria might possibly be anxious and disposed to do so to safeguard her own interests, but Germany, as the ally of Russia, will interfere to prevent her.

Consequently, should the safety of Constantinople be menaced by a Russian army, England alone can prevent it falling into Russian hands.

It is evident to me that the object of Prince Gortchakow is to temporise, to gain time by negotiation while the Russian armies are advancing, and to endeavour to lull England into a feeling of security by pacifying assurances and protestations against any intention of occupying Constantinople. Count Schouvaloff's visit to St. Petersburg is, in my opinion, chiefly with a view to gain time, and this impression is confirmed by the earnest hope expressed to your Lordship before his departure that no step of a decisive character would be taken by Her Majesty's Government pending the explanations which he hoped to be able to supply.

It is evident that, if the Russians should occupy Constantinople, they will have the future of Turkey in their hands, and that they will be able to decide the question relating to the navigation of the Dardanelles as they may think fit.

The vital question, therefore, to consider is, at what stage of the advance of the Russian army into Turkey the interests of England in regard to Constantinople and the Dardanelles are menaced.

I have no hesitation in saying that the passage of the Danube by the vast army now assembled on its banks will be a direct menace to English interests, and that it should be the moment when England should take active and immediate measures for ensuring the safety of Constantinople from a Russian occupation.

I am firmly persuaded that it is the object of the Russian Government to induce England with the belief that after the first decisive engagement on crossing the Danube the Emperor will offer terms of peace, and they will further argue that until they reach the Balkans there can be no justification for alarm. But on a question of such vital importance to England, there should be no political speculation taken into account; and it is further to be considered that if England occupies a strong military defensive position on Turkish territory, she will be the better able to aid in the conclusion of a satisfactory peace.

Nor can I see that the measures which may be deemed necessary to safeguard the interests of England in the East should be regarded in the light of an hostile act against Russia. On the contrary, I believe that an occupation of Constantinople and the Dardanelles by England for defensive purposes would be the surest means of coming to an understanding with Russia in regard to the future of Turkey, and may possibly be the means of saving Europe from more serious complications.

It ought to be viewed as a measure for insuring peace, and not for making war; for enabling England to have a commanding voice in the settlement of the Oriental Question; and for safeguarding the present and future interests of Great Britain in Europe and in Asia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Doc. 645 *Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received May 28.)

(No. 215. Secret.)

My Lord,

Berlin, May 22, 1877.

PRINCE BISMARCK arrived yesterday from the country on his way to Kissingen, and had an audience of the Emperor at 4 o'clock.

When I saw his Highness later on in the evening he renewed to me verbally the communication he had sent me through Herr von Bülow, and which I reported to your Lordship in my despatch No. 204, Secret, of the 17th instant, respecting the mission of M. de Gontaut Biron to Metz, and the attempts of the French Government to establish more intimate and confidential relations with Russia, and through Russia with Germany, in regard to Eastern affairs.

Prince Bismarck repeated word for word what Herr von Bülow had already said to me in his name, as reported to your Lordship in the above-mentioned despatch, but in the course of conversation he added some further information to the following effect:—

Germany, he said, had made no secret understanding or Treaty with Russia; she would maintain her independence, and would not entertain the offers of the French Government to enter into any secret or special understanding with Russia in regard to Eastern affairs. How Prince Gortchakow might receive the secret overtures of the French Government he did not know.

He wished Russia well out of her present difficulties and would give her what moral support he could, but Germany would not form part of a coalition of Powers for any special purpose, and he hoped other Powers would refrain from joining coalitions against Germany.

Above all he wished to keep on terms of friendship and goodwill with England and to join with Her Majesty's Government in taking advantage of the earliest opportunity to facilitate the re-establishment of peace between Russia and Turkey.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 646

The Earl of Derby to Count Beust.

(Confidential.)

M. l'Ambassadeur,

Foreign Office, May 19, 1877.

IT appears to Her Majesty's Government that the time has arrived when, in the interest alike of Great Britain and of Austria-Hungary, it is desirable that a frank and full understanding should be arrived at between them as to the policy which they shall adopt in certain contingencies.

Her Majesty's Government have taken the earliest opportunity since the outbreak of the Russo-Turkish war, of announcing their determination to maintain a neutral policy as between the two countries engaged in hostilities. Declarations to this effect have been made by them publicly in Parliament, and in an even more formal manner by the Proclamation of Neutrality lately issued. But while avowing and defending the policy above stated, they have from the first made it known that this attitude of quiescence would not be maintained by them if, as a result of the military operations now in progress, danger to British interests should ensue, and that in such case they reserved their full freedom of action.

One of the events which, in making this reserve, they have had in view, is the possible seizure of Constantinople by a Russian force. The issue of the present campaign cannot be foreseen; but, from what is known of the numerical superiority of the Russian armies in Europe, and of the weakness and disorganization of the Turkish troops, it would seem not improbable that the Russian advance may be rapid, and that the Russian Commanders may at no very distant date find the capital within their reach. It is equally probable that, once in possession of Constantinople, the feeling of the Russian people, excited by a successful campaign, would make it difficult for the Emperor, however well-disposed to fulfil the promises which he has given, to abandon a conquest the acquisition of which has notoriously been for generations past an object of Russian ambition.

Her Majesty's Government cannot doubt but that the independence of Constantinople and the freedom of the Straits are objects not less important to Austria than to England, and which Austria, like England, will not be prepared to forego without an effort. If such be the case it ought not to be difficult to come to an understanding, according to which common interests shall be defended by previously concerted action.

I had the honour of lately making known to your Excellency, confidentially, the contents of a note which I have addressed to Count Schouvaloff on this among other subjects. The purpose of the present communication is to invite the Government which your Excellency represents to consider and discuss a plan of joint action in the event above referred to, namely, that of a Russian march on Constantinople. It may be hoped that the contingency in question is not likely to occur, but in matters of such gravity nothing which admits of calculation should be left to chance.

It seems to Her Majesty's Government that the naval force of which they can dispose is adequate for the emergency, so far as maritime operations are concerned; but the distance of England from the scene of action, and the smallness of the land force available at short notice, give peculiar value to the co-operation of a great military Power such as that which your Excellency represents.

I postpone all questions of detail until I learn from your Excellency whether the Austro-Hungarian Government is prepared to enter into confidential negotiations on the basis above stated.

It must not be forgotten that if the action taken is to be effectual, definitive arrangements cannot be long delayed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 647

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 204. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, May 23, 1877.

THE Russian Chargé d'Affaires called upon me to-day at my request, and I informed him that in view of the condition of public opinion in this country it was very desirable that Her Majesty's Government should receive with as little delay as possible an answer to the note which I had addressed to Count Schouvaloff before his departure from England as to the limits within which this country would be able to maintain a passive attitude during the present war. I said that in the present state of affairs it seemed not unlikely that the Russian forces might have shortly some considerable military success, and that the prospect or possibility of an advance upon Constantinople would cause excitement and apprehension here which it would be in the interest both of this Government and his own to allay. I wished him, therefore,

to impress upon Prince Gortchakow the expediency of our receiving assurances from the Cabinet St. Petersburg of a nature to satisfy public feeling in England.

M. de Bartholomei said that he expected Count Schouvaloff to be back in England by the 6th or 7th June, and he asked whether it would not be sufficient if his Excellency were the bearer of these assurances.

I said that I did not wish to fix any particular date; but I thought it was a matter of great importance that the answer should be received as soon as possible.

M. de Bartholomei promised to forward the substance of my observations to St. Petersburg by telegraph.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 648 *Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 29.)*

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.)

Vienna, May 29, 1877, 6 P.M.

A MESSENGER with Count Andrassy's answer to your Lordship's letter to the Austrian Ambassador will leave to-night. His Excellency objected to giving me details of its contents, as he wishes you to receive it *in extenso* without an imperfect impression of his views being conveyed to you by telegraph. He says that though the Powers have not opposed the war from a conviction that the *status quo* in Turkey cannot be maintained, Russia can only be permitted to make peace on terms to which they can assent. He has frequently stated at St. Petersburg what he cannot permit, and your Lordship has now expressed more formally the view of England. It would, in his opinion, however, have been better if England and Austria had first come to a clear understanding between themselves before stating their views to Russia. Your Lordship will now learn in detail those of Austria, and if you accept his programme he feels confident that it can be carried out without a resort to joint measures. He said that the Russian forces are still a long way from Constantinople, but, in his opinion, it is a matter of indifference whether they get there or not, as they cannot possibly remain against the will of Europe. He expressed entire confidence in the Emperor's declarations, and on my objecting that His Majesty might not have the power to fulfil them he said that His Majesty may have proved himself to be weak in other cases, but we can, if necessary, strengthen his desire to act up to his engagement. He has submitted his views to Her Majesty's Government without reserve, trusting to his communication being considered strictly confidential, and he has not hitherto taken them (the public) here into his confidence, because he believes that if the two Governments wish to obtain their objects without war they are most likely to do so by keeping their plans secret, and by avoiding premature action.

He proposes sending some further explanations by my messenger on Thursday, but he has lost no time in meeting your Lordship's overtures by his present communication.

I asked whether M. Novikoff was bearer of any communication from him to Russia, and he assured me in the most positive manner that he was not.

Doc. 649

Count Andrassy to Count Beust.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Count Beust, June 1.)

(Translation.)

M. le Comte,

Vienna, May 29, 1877.

THE English messenger has brought me your Excellency's Report, with the Earl of Derby's note dated May 19. I do not delay to transmit to you at once a reply thereto.

I am very grateful to Lord Derby for the suggestion of an exchange of ideas. We can only expect advantage to arise therefrom.

If I comprehend rightly the action of the British Government up to the outbreak of the present war, as well as the communications which they have made to us, there is no question in the present exchange of opinions of a departure from the course hitherto adopted by them, but of the protection of the interests of both parties.

Had it been thought fit ("sollte") to stop Russia in the war which she had undertaken, England, like us, was in possession of the means. The Treaty of April 15, 1856,

entitled us to protest against the invasion of Turkish territory. Article VIII of the Treaty of March 30 of the same year provided for a mediation between the Porte and Russia.

Neither England, nor France, nor we ourselves, have had recourse to this. The reason, on the one hand, lay in the fact that no one of the Powers wished to intervene to preserve the *status quo*, as they were not convinced of the possibility of maintaining it; on the other hand, in the knowledge that the fact ("faktum") of the war involved no such danger to themselves as not even the dread of an European war should have withheld them from averting; and, lastly, that such a danger might first be created by the results of the war, the limitation of which, however, would lie in the power of Europe.

The position which we have now to take up appears to me to follow naturally from the attitude which we observed in tacit agreement with England before the outbreak of the war.

Since, in spite of our having offered the means thereto, we have not kept Russia from war; since we have declared, directly or indirectly, that we were not willing to interfere on behalf of Turkey; since we have made no *casus belli* of the invasion by Russia, the honesty and candour which we wish to observe in all our relations require that we should not restrain Russia from deciding her quarrel by arms, and eventually overcoming the Porte.

Since, however, on the other hand, the consequences of such a war might produce a state of things affecting our interests as well as those of Europe, we must reserve our whole influence for the final settlement of events.

The object of an understanding cannot therefore be that the action of Russia, so far as it is directed to the settlement by arms of the struggle with the Porte, should be opposed; the basis of an understanding lies rather in the answer to the question, What are the consequences of the present war which we can accept, and what are those which we cannot allow?

With this view it is impossible to settle beforehand a programme which shall be equally applicable in all conceivable eventualities of the war.

It must be framed in one way if the Porte, as is possible, is not overcome by force of arms, and retains her European domains; in another way, if the course of events secures for Russia the satisfaction of a victorious campaign, but at the same time gives evidence that the elements of continued existence are still inherent in the Ottoman Empire; in another way, again, necessarily, if the war leads not only to a military overthrow of Turkey, but also gives a shock to her stability and discloses signs of her inevitable dissolution.

Convinced that a programme which would be useful and practicable in one of these eventualities could not possibly be applied to the others, we consider that under present circumstances it is best to settle only upon the general outlines of a programme, and to specify those issues of the war which, as affecting our interests, we could not accept.

This course is pursued in Lord Derby's letter to Count Schouvaloff, and although that document mostly refers to eventualities which appear to us but little likely to arise, yet we do not hesitate hereinafter to specify those of our interests which we are determined to defend against all eventualities of the war.

Although we consider the Treaty of Paris as capable of modification, and would not insist upon its full maintenance, yet we adhere to the fundamental ideas of that Treaty. Consequently we could not accept:—

1. That the exclusive protectorate over the Christian populations of the Balkan Peninsula should be conceded to any one Christian Power.

2. That the definitive settlement of the results of the war should take place without the participation of the Guaranteeing Powers, and that the creation into a State ("Constituierung") of the Christian populations of the Balkan Peninsula should be granted ("oktroyirt") through the action of a single Power.

Furthermore we cannot consent to—

3. An acquisition of territory by Russia on the right bank of the Danube.
4. The incorporation of Roumania with Russia, or the dependence of that Principality on the Russian Empire.

5. The erection in the above-named countries of a *secundogeniture*, whether Russian or Austro-Hungarian.

6. The occupation by Russia of Constantinople.

7. Finally, no large Slave State should be established at the expense of the non-Slave elements of the Balkan Peninsula, and in any case the reconstitution

should be limited at most to the autonomy of the present provinces under a native Chief.

This is the position we have taken up. It was our view before the war and will unchangeably remain so.

We have not, on the other hand, avoided pointing out to the Russian Government the essence of the points in which our interests might be affected. Her Britannic Majesty's Government is aware that, at the time of the Sumarokoff mission, we rejected the idea of a Russian occupation of Bulgaria as a guarantee for the reforms.

We did this for reasons which, having regard to the private nature of the correspondence between Sovereign and Sovereign, we did not make public, but which, nevertheless, left no doubt as to the view we took of our interests. We expressed the fear that after an occupation of Bulgaria it would be hardly possible for the Russian Government to withdraw their troops, and to hand over the Christians to the Porte, after they had once been emancipated. Neither could we assent to a permanent Russian supremacy over Bulgaria, or, in fact, on the right bank of the Danube.

We have likewise declared that an invasion of Servia by Russian troops, even if only as a temporary military measure, would be incompatible with our interests.

In both these cases we have received from the Russian Government assurances in substance satisfactory, and we have also observed nothing in the attitude of Russia to give us reason to suspect that the Cabinet of St. Petersburg contemplates acting without regard to our interests.

For the continuance of this disposition on the part of Russia we possess a double security: firstly, in our confidence in the Emperor Alexander's intentions; secondly, in the circumstance that Russia has in fact entered into action with a full knowledge of our interests and of our serious intention to protect them, and has, at the same time, placed herself in a military position which she would certainly have avoided if she had not intended to abstain from injuring the interests of Austria-Hungary.

In presence of this double guarantee it would be acting on our part contrary to all the laws of loyalty, and to all good faith, to enter upon any hostile action towards Russia so long as she by her attitude gives no occasion for it. Should, however—which we cannot suppose—a change occur in the course of events which would make these securities ineffectual; should the Russian Government, under the pressure of an internal movement (*lit.* "current"), or through other unforeseen circumstances, cease to be master of its decisions, the question presents itself to us—which must under any circumstances be answered—whether we are determined and ready to stand up for what we have stated to be our interests with the whole strength of the Monarchy, and, if necessary, by force of arms.

Our answer on this point is decidedly, Yes.

This is the unreserved statement of our position. Nor do we delay at once communicating as frankly our views with regard to those points which England has declared that she must protect.

Of the interests which the letter to Count Schouvaloff sets forth, we can, in regard to two—namely, the freedom of the passage through the Suez Canal, and the maintenance of the *status quo* in the Persian Gulf—express the assurance, without awaiting any knowledge of the Russian reply, that Russia, under present circumstances, does not, and cannot, contemplate any alteration in this respect.

The precautions ("cautelen") respecting the possession of Constantinople and the passage of the Dardanelles come, therefore, alone under consideration.

We have taken up a position towards Russia in regard to the first question, and had no occasion to touch upon the latter. As, however, the free passage of the Dardanelles and of the Bosphorus for Russian shipping is identical with the surrender of Constantinople, the two questions appear to us to be but one.

We are, in fact, of the opinion to which Lord Derby gives expression in his note of the 19th of May, that these points interest us also in a high degree. We cannot, however, refrain from making a special remark as to the view which we take of this interest.

That Russia should neither command Constantinople or the Dardanelles is to us of great importance, but we can only contemplate this question in connection with all the important interests which we have defined above. If we should be obliged to concede that the principle of the Treaty of 1856, by which no single Power should exercise a Protectorate over the Balkan Peninsula, must be given up in favour of Russia; if we allow the creation into a State ("Constituierung") of these populations to take place through Russian influence, without our co-operation; if we should permit

Russia to incorporate Roumania, to take Bulgaria, or any district on the right bank of the Danube, under its direct rule or *secundogeniture*, the question whether Constantinople were actually in the possession of Russia or not would be a matter of very secondary importance to Austria-Hungary. If we pointed out to Russia that a Russian occupation of Constantinople could not be permitted, it was because of the conviction that the Power in possession of Constantinople must, in the natural course of events, command Bulgaria and other districts of the Balkans, just as the State which holds Bulgaria and the districts beyond must inevitably obtain possession of Constantinople.

We accordingly consider all the interests which require protection in the East as bound up together, and are of opinion that no one of them can be given up without sacrificing the other.

This conviction determines the exchange of ideas to which the communication of the Earl of Derby has given rise. If his Lordship shares the views of the Imperial and Royal Government the natural solidarity of our interests stands out prominently of itself, and there remains for a further exchange of ideas the question of coming to an understanding as to the means by which these interests can be most surely protected, if possible without endangering the peace of Europe.

Your Excellency is authorized to communicate these remarks to Lord Derby upon the understanding that he agrees to keep our overtures secret, and should he desire it you may leave a copy with him.

Receive, &c.
(Signed) ANDRASSY.

Doc. 650

The Earl of Derby to Count Beust.

(Confidential.)

M. l'Ambassadeur,

Foreign Office, June 2, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that I have laid before my colleagues in Cabinet the note from Count Andrassy which you were good enough to communicate to me yesterday, and that my colleagues agree with me in thinking that it contains a frank, clear, and satisfactory statement of the views of the Austro-Hungarian Government as to their position with regard to the possible effects upon the interests of the Empire, as well as upon those of Europe, of the consequences of the war between Russia and Turkey.

Her Majesty's Government concur with Count Andrassy that the natural harmony of the interests of Great Britain and Austria-Hungary is self-evident, and they are prepared for the further exchange of ideas which his Excellency invites as to the means by which those common interests can be most securely protected.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 651

Prince Gortchakow to Count Schouvaloff.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Count Schouvaloff, June 8.)

M. le Comte,

St. Pétersbourg, le 1^{er} Mai, 1877.

VOTRE Excellence a été chargée par Lord Derby d'une lettre qui expose les vues du Cabinet Anglais quant aux questions qui pourraient être impliquées dans la guerre actuelle et toucheraient à des intérêts que l'Angleterre doit défendre.

Sa Majesté l'Empereur en a pris connaissance avec un vif intérêt et apprécie la franchise d'explications dont le but est d'écarter des malentendus entre les deux Gouvernements.

Notre auguste Maître m'ordonne d'y répondre par une entière réciprocité, en vous mettant en mesure d'exposer avec la même franchise et la même clarté nos vues, tant sur les points mentionnés par Lord Derby que sur ceux qui touchent à des intérêts que, de son côté, Sa Majesté Impériale a le devoir de sauvegarder.

Le Cabinet Impérial ne veut ni bloquer, ni interrompre, ni menacer en rien, la navigation du Canal de Suez. Il le considère comme une œuvre internationale, intéressant le commerce du monde, et qui doit rester hors de toute atteinte.

L'Egypte fait partie de l'Empire Ottoman, et ses contingents figurent dans l'armée Turque. La Russie pourrait donc se considérer comme en guerre avec elle. Toutefois,

le Cabinet Impérial ne méconnaît ni les intérêts Européens engagés dans ce pays, ni ceux de l'Angleterre en particulier. Il ne fera pas entrer l'Egypte dans le rayon de ses opérations militaires.

Pour ce qui concerne Constantinople, sans pouvoir préjuger la marche ni l'issue de la guerre, le Cabinet Impérial répète qu'une acquisition de cette capitale est exclue des vues de Sa Majesté l'Empereur. Il reconnaît qu'en tous cas le sort de Constantinople est une question d'intérêt commun, qui ne peut être réglée que par une entente générale, et que si la possession de cette ville devait être mise en question elle ne saurait appartenir à aucune des Puissances de l'Europe.

Quant aux Détroits, quoique les deux rives appartiennent au même Souverain, ils forment le débouché exclusif de deux vastes mers où tout le monde a des intérêts. Il importe donc à la paix et à l'équilibre général que cette question soit réglée d'un commun accord sur des bases équitables et efficacement garanties.

Lord Derby a fait allusion à d'autres intérêts Britanniques pouvant être affectés par l'extension éventuelle de la guerre, comme le Golfe Persique et la route des Indes. Le Cabinet Impérial déclare qu'il n'étendra pas la guerre au delà de ce qu'exige le but hautement et clairement proclamé pour lequel Sa Majesté l'Empereur a été obligé de prendre les armes. Il aura égard aux intérêts Britanniques mentionnés par Lord Derby, tant que l'Angleterre restera dans la neutralité.

Il a le droit d'attendre que, de son côté, le Gouvernement Anglais prendra également en juste considération les intérêts particuliers qui pour la Russie sont engagés dans cette guerre et en vue desquels elle s'est imposée de si grands sacrifices.

Ces intérêts résident dans la nécessité absolue de mettre un terme à la déplorable situation des Chrétiens sous la domination des Turcs et aux crises permanentes qu'elle provoque.

Cet état de choses et les violences qui l'accompagnent excitent en Russie une agitation motivée par le sentiment Chrétien, très profond dans le peuple Russe, et par les liens de foi et de race qui l'unissent à une grande partie des populations Chrétiennes de la Turquie. Le Gouvernement Impérial est d'autant plus obligé d'en tenir compte, qu'elle réagit à la fois sur la situation intérieure et extérieure de l'Empire. A chacune de ces crises sa politique est suspectée et incriminée, ses relations internationales, son commerce, ses finances, son crédit en sont affectés.

Sa Majesté l'Empereur ne peut pas laisser la Russie exposée indéfiniment à ces chances désastreuses qui entravent son développement pacifique et lui causent un préjudice incalculable.

C'est pour en tarir la source que Sa Majesté Impériale s'est décidée à imposer à son pays les charges de la guerre.

Ce but ne peut être atteint que si les populations Chrétiennes de la Turquie sont placées dans une situation où leur existence et leur sécurité seraient efficacement garanties contre les intolérables abus de l'administration Turque. Cet intérêt vital pour la Russie n'est en contradiction avec aucun des intérêts de l'Europe, qui souffre, de son côté, de l'état précaire de l'Orient.

Le Cabinet Impérial s'est efforcé de le réaliser avec le concours des Puissances amies et alliées.

Obligé de le poursuivre seul, notre auguste Maître est résolu à ne pas poser les armes avant de l'avoir complètement, sûrement, efficacement garantie.

Veuillez exposer ces considérations à Lord Derby, en lui disant que le Cabinet Impérial est en droit d'espérer que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique les appréciera avec le même sentiment d'équité qui nous porte à respecter les intérêts de l'Angleterre, et qu'il y puisera la même conviction que nous, c'est-à-dire, qu'il n'y a rien dans les vues échangées entre les deux Gouvernements avec une franchise réciproque qui ne puisse se concilier pour le maintien de leurs bons rapports et la paix de l'Orient et de l'Europe.

Recevez, &c.
(Signé) GORTCHAKOW.

Doc. 652

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 9.)

(No. 473. Very Confidential.)

My Lord,

Paris, June 7, 1877.

THE Duc Decazes told me this afternoon that he had received an important despatch from General Leflô, the French Ambassador at St. Petersburg, respecting

the views of the Russian Government with regard to peace, and that he should send this evening instructions to the Marquis d'Harcourt to speak confidentially to your Lordship on the subject.

The Duke went on to say that in fact General Leflô reported that Prince Gortchakow had assured him that the Emperor of Russia had no desire whatever that his army should cross the Balkans; but that, on the contrary, so soon as the Danube had been crossed, and the Russian arms had achieved a decided and unmistakable success on the other side, His Majesty would receive with satisfaction overtures from the Guaranteeing Powers to use their good offices for arranging terms of peace.

Prince Gortchakow had, the Duc Decazes proceeded to tell me, suggested that the initiative in proposing to the other Powers to make overtures of the kind might very properly be taken by France. The Duke himself did not, however, concur in this suggestion. He thought, on the contrary, that it was from Germany that the first proposal would come with the best effect; and he conceived that Her Majesty's Government might very well intimate this to the German Government. If, however, this plan should not be deemed feasible, the Duke was of opinion that a proposal might be made by Her Majesty's Government simultaneously to all the Guaranteeing Powers to unite in offering their good offices to the belligerents.

For his own part, the Duke said, he should heartily welcome such a proposal, and on its being made should at once assume that it would be equally acceptable to the other Governments.

Speaking, however, very confidentially, he would not conceal from your Lordship or from me that he had reason to fear that Austria was far from wishing that the war between Russia and Turkey should be brought to an immediate close. He had (he said) obtained this morning absolute certainty that on the breaking out of the war a Convention, Protocol, or diplomatic document of some kind had been signed by Count Andrassy with M. de Novikow, the Russian Ambassador at Vienna. Now this document contained a stipulation that neither Russia nor Austria should occupy any part of Servia, but that if the war went on to such lengths as to make a re-distribution of territory feasible, Austria should take possession first of Turkish Croatia and subsequently of the whole of Bosnia. The Duc Decazes was afraid that the Austrian Government now held so much to these acquisitions that it would oppose a peace made so early as to preclude their being effected.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

Doc. 653

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 9.)

(No. 474. Very Confidential.)

My Lord,

Paris, June 7, 1877.

MY immediately preceding despatch No. 473 of this date, and the telegram of which it is a paraphrase, contain the most important part of what the Duc Decazes said to me yesterday about the prospects of peace; and full particulars will no doubt be given to your Lordship by the Marquis d'Harcourt on his receiving the instruction which was about to be sent to him. Nevertheless, it may be worth while to record here some further details of my conversation with the Duke.

His Excellency seemed to think that the Russian terms of peace would be—

1. The cession to Russia of Batoum, Kars, and Bayazid, in Asia.
2. The restoration to her of the part of Bessarabia of which she was deprived by the Treaty of Paris.
3. The opening of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles to her fleet.

On the other hand, the Duke had, he told me, heard that Count Andrassy had talked of the following as probable results of the war:—

The independence of Roumania and Servia.

The autonomy of Bulgaria.

An increase of the territory of Montenegro.

The annexation of Thessaly and Epirus to Greece.

The opening of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus to the ships of war of all nations.

With regard to the written engagement between Russia and Austria, the Duc Decazes said that he had all along felt sure that there was a definite and complete

understanding between the two Powers, but that it was only this morning that he had received positive information of the fact. He remarked that the desire to acquire territory explained a great deal which would otherwise be unaccountable in the policy of Austria since the outbreak of the insurrection in Herzegovina.

I asked the Duke whether the document in question did not contain any stipulations as to advantages to be obtained by Russia, in consideration of the acquisitions of territory accorded to Austria. His Excellency said that he could not give me a positive answer, but that he supposed the engagement of Austria not to intervene against her in the war was regarded by Russia as an equivalent.

The Duke told me that he knew that the Austrian Government were very angry with Italy, and resented bitterly the endeavours made by that Power to thwart their designs on the east coast of the Adriatic, and the jealous watch kept on all their proceedings by Italian agents.

He said that Russia had applied to the Austrian Government for leave to station her fleet at Cattaro, and that the Austrian Government had refused, alleging Italian jealousy as one of its reasons for doing so.

He mentioned that while Austria most strongly objected to the establishment of the neutrality of Roumania under the guarantee of the Powers, she was favourable to that country being declared wholly independent.

Finally, the Duc Decazes observed that, for his own part, he regarded the opening of the Dardanelles as the only very delicate and difficult question.

The danger of which he expressed most apprehension was a possible union of the Russian, German, and Italian fleets against France. He seemed to consider that such a union would be menacing to England also, unless she and France agreed to stand by one another.

The Duke avowed that in his opinion the opening of the Straits would be a danger to France, and he dwelt much on the importance of England and France acting together to protect themselves from the perils to which he thought it would expose them both. But he did not make any offer to unite with England in endeavouring to maintain the present Treaty stipulations on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

Doc. 654

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 9.)

(No. 475. Secret.)

My Lord,

Paris, June 7, 1877.

THE Duc Decazes has dwelt much of late on the danger to which France and England would be exposed if the Dardanelles were opened to the Russian fleets; and the night before last he mentioned to me very confidentially a plan which he had formed for counteracting this danger.

It appeared that his plan was that England and France should establish a joint British and French Protectorate over Egypt and Syria, and should include in it, as advanced posts, Crete and Cyprus.

I did not feel justified in giving any encouragement to this plan.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

Doc. 655

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 9.)

(No. 476. Secret.)

My Lord,

Paris, June 7, 1877.

THE urgency of the Duc Decazes in speaking of the question of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles as the only difficult and critical question in prospect, and in representing the opening of these straits as an inevitable result of the war, made me suppose that he must be leading up to some proposal to Her Majesty's Government, and in fact, on the night before last, as I have already informed your Lordship, he suggested to me in strict confidence that, in order to guard against the danger to which English and French interests would be exposed, the two countries should form an alliance in order to establish a French and English Protectorate over Syria and

Egypt, comprising Candia and Rhodes as advanced posts. He urged that the Russian fleet would never venture to sally forth from the Dardanelles to attack such a position as this plan would give to France and England; that, at all events, the united fleets of France and England would be more than a match for those of all the rest of the world; and that the communication between the Mediterranean and India would be perfectly secure, so long as Egypt and Syria were under the control of the two great Western Powers.

The Duke added that he had at first thought that Holland, to whom communication with her eastern possessions was extremely important, might be included in the alliance, but that on reflection he had thought that she might be exposed to dangers by joining England and France in the proposed Protectorate which would be out of proportion to any addition of strength which she could bring to them.

I listened attentively to what the Duc Decazes said, but, as I have already had the honour to report to your Lordship, I did not feel justified in giving any encouragement to his plan.

In fact, it seemed to me to be open to many obvious objections.

In the first place, it is difficult not to suspect that it has been prompted as much by jealousy of England as by jealousy of Russia; or, in other words, that one of the main objects of it is to prevent England taking steps to place her means of communication with India under her own exclusive control, while the momentary eclipse of French power makes it easy for her to do so.

Secondly, it may be doubted whether the execution of the plan would not tend to place the control of the communications in the hands of France rather than of England. The Protectorate could hardly be established and maintained by naval forces exclusively; and if troops were to be used on shore, the Power which could supply the larger contingent would be apt to exercise the greater influence.

A third objection, and it is one to which I myself attach the greatest importance, is that an attempt to exercise this kind of protectorate in common could hardly fail to lead to a quarrel between the two countries.

The interests of France in keeping open the communication with the East are very small in comparison with those of England; they would be sacrificed at once to objects which France has near at heart in Europe. They would weigh as nothing in the balance if any other Power held out a hope of assisting France to recover Alsace and Lorraine. For this reason an alliance with France for the purpose of withstanding Russian encroachments in the East is no longer to be depended upon.

As France recovers her strength, her old desire for predominance in Egypt will revive. With regard to this matter I venture to refer your Lordship to my Secret despatch No. 365 of the 8th instant. The plan of a joint Protectorate might serve to bridge over for France the interval between her present state of convalescence and her complete recovery; but unless the position of England in Egypt be established now on a footing too firm to be shaken, it will be rash to expect that when France has recovered her strength she will fail to assert her old pretensions to be paramount in the country.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

Doc. 656

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 12.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Secret.)

Vienna, June 11, 1877.

I HAVE had an interview to-day with Count Andrassy. He is gratified by the opinion expressed by Her Majesty's Government on the statement of his views as to the consequences of the war, but he did not seem quite confident that they concur in his opinion as to solidarity of the territorial question in the Balkan Peninsula with that of Constantinople, and he will ask for further explanations from Count Beust on this point previous to expressing his views as to the eventual means which may be necessary for protecting the common interests of the two countries.

He had received Prince Gortchakow's answer to your Lordship's letter to Russian Ambassador, and agreed with you as to gravity of threatened difficulty respecting navigation of the Dardanelles.

He considers that Russian answer admits that passage of ships of war through the Straits must be treated as an European one, but he is alarmed at Count Schouvaloff

maintaining, as reported by Count Beust, that as Russia was deprived of a right to send her vessels through the Straits after an unsuccessful war, she will be justified in demanding its restoration after a successful one.

His Excellency is not aware of Russia ever having had such a right, but he will cause an inquiry to be instituted into the grounds on which it may be held to have existed.

It may be presumed, however, he said, that if this pretension of Russia is insisted on it will be supported by France and probably by Italy, but he seemed surprised when I added that I feared it would also meet with the support of Germany. The Emperor is at Ischl, and he will probably express no opinion on the subject until His Majesty's return, but I believe his decision on it will be guided by the importance which Great Britain may attach to it. He said, however, that if all the European Powers have equal interest in Constantinople, as admitted by Russia, it cannot be for the advantage of the others that the town should be placed at the mercy of a Russian fleet within twenty-four hours' sail of it. He also is fully alive to the inconvenience of Russia becoming a great Mediterranean Power.

Doc. 657

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(Telegraphic.)

(Very Confidential.)

Foreign Office, June 12, 1877.

THE Russian Ambassador has communicated to me the following terms on which Russia would be ready to make peace before crossing the Balkans :—

“Bulgaria, as far as the Balkans, to be constituted a vassal autonomous province under the guarantee of Europe. The Turkish troops and functionaries to be withdrawn, the fortresses to be disarmed and rased. Self-government to be established, with the support of a national militia, to be organized as soon as possible.

“The Powers to come to an agreement for securing to the part of Bulgaria south of the Balkans, as well as to the other Christian provinces of Turkey, the best possible guarantees for regular administration.

“Montenegro and Servia to receive an augmentation of territory, to be determined upon in common.

“Bosnia and Herzegovina to be endowed with institutions judged by common consent to be suitable to their internal condition and proper to secure to them a good native administration. The situation of these two provinces on the frontier of Austria-Hungary would give this latter Power a preponderating voice in their future organization.

“Servia as well as Bulgaria would remain under the suzerainty of the Sultan; the relations of the Suzerain and his vassals to be defined in such manner as to prevent conflicts.

“The question of the independence of Roumania to be decided by common agreement.

“If the Porte were to sue for peace, and accept the above conditions before the Russian troops have crossed the Balkans, Russia would accept peace, but would demand in return, as private advantages, in compensation for the expenses of the war :—

“The restoration to Russia of the portion of Bessarabia ceded in 1856, as far as the northern arm of the Danube (that is, excluding the delta), and the cession of Batoum with an adjacent territory.

“In the same case, Roumania to be compensated by common agreement, either by the proclamation of her independence, or, if she remained vassal, by a part of the Dobrudsha.

“If Austria-Hungary should demand compensation either for the acquisitions made by Russia, or as a pledge of security against the above-mentioned advantages to be given to the Christian Principalities in the Balkan peninsula, Russia would not object to her seeking those compensations in Bosnia and part of Herzegovina.

“If the Porte were to ask for peace and accept the above conditions before the Russian armies have crossed the Balkans, the Emperor of Russia would consent not to push military operations any further. If the Turkish Government should refuse, Russia will pursue the war until the Porte is forced to subscribe to terms of peace. In that case, the conditions of the Imperial Cabinet might be different.”

Ask Count Andrassy if he has received any similar intimation from the Russian Government, and what view he takes of the terms.

Doc. 658 *Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received June 13.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Most Confidential.)

Therapia, June 13, 1877, 1.10 P.M.

WITH reference to your telegram of yesterday, in my judgment the Porte would not consent to the terms of peace suggested to your Lordship by the Russian Ambassador. It could only see in them the dismemberment and annihilation of the Turkish Empire, and I am convinced that no Turkish Minister would dare to listen to them unless Turkey were utterly prostrate, and Russian armies at the gates of Constantinople. It would moreover, I think, be very dangerous at this moment even to suggest them to the Porte or to the Sultan. The secret would not be kept, and there is a party in the Palace which would at once make use of the information to drive the country into measures of despair which might have the most fatal consequences, and might result in very gravely compromising the interests of England. Of course, if Her Majesty's Government desire, I will sound the Sultan or his Ministers upon the subject, but I venture earnestly to advise that this should not be done, at any rate at the present time.

Doc. 659

*The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.**

(Telegraphic.)

(Most Confidential.)

Foreign Office, June 14, 1877, 5.45 P.M.

WITH reference to previous communications as to proposed Russian terms of peace Prince Gortchakow has now telegraphed to Russian Ambassador here that information on the spot shows that Bulgaria cannot be divided into two provinces, as such an arrangement would exclude from the autonomous institutions the most industrious and intelligent part of the population, and that which had most suffered from Turkish misrule.

I have told Count Schouvaloff as my personal opinion that, in my judgment, the Turkish Government were not likely to have accepted the terms as first proposed, except under pressure of absolute necessity, and that this important modification made acceptance still more improbable.

You may inform Count Andrassy privately of the above.

Doc. 660

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(Telegraphic.)

(Confidential.)

Foreign Office, June 14, 1877, 6.45 P.M.

IN conversation with Count Beust yesterday I pointed out that Prince Gortchakow, in his recent explanations to Her Majesty's Government, while positively disclaiming any design of permanently holding Constantinople, had declined to give any pledge as to the temporary occupation of that capital. I pointed out the difficulty the Emperor of Russia might possibly have in retiring from the Turkish capital when once in his possession, unless he could give reasons for such a sacrifice which would satisfy his army and his people; and I asked his Excellency to put the following question to his Government from me.

Are the Austrian Government willing to accept the fact of a Russian occupation of Constantinople, or would they, in case of need, join with that of England to prevent such occupation taking place? Russia has given no promise that she will not occupy Constantinople—she declines to do so. Do the Austrian Government think it safe that she should go there, relying on her assurances that she will not stay?

I also told Count Beust that the Russian Government professed to have no fear of opposition on the part of Austria, affirming that a complete understanding existed between the two countries as to the conditions to be imposed upon Turkey. The prevalence of such an impression, though I could not suppose it to be otherwise than unfounded must, I said, tend to neutralize the influence of Austria. If England and Austria could come to a thorough understanding as to what acts on the part of Russia should or should not be opposed, they would be masters of the situation; since Russia, with a Turkish war on her hands, would certainly not risk a quarrel with two European Powers.

The above is for your personal information only in case Count Andrassy should speak to you on the subject.

Doc. 661

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(Telegraphic.)

(Confidential.)

Foreign Office, June 14, 1877.

IN reference to your telegram of yesterday you had better explain to Count Andrassy that Her Majesty's Government have expressed no opinion upon the Russian terms of peace, which, indeed, they think it very unlikely that the Turks would accept unless reduced to extremity. Her Majesty's Government were anxious to know whether they had been communicated to Count Andrassy, as was stated by the Russian Ambassador here.

Doc. 662

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 15.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Most Confidential.)

Therapia, June 15, 1877, 10:30 A.M.

YOU may be quite sure that not a word will be said by me about the Russian conditions; it would be, in my opinion, most dangerous even to hint them to the Porte. I have written with reference to this by last messenger. I will write again.

Doc. 663

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, June 15, 1877, 5:30 P.M.

WITH reference to your telegram of the 11th instant, in my conversation with Count Beust on the 13th instant, of which I sent you a summary by telegraph yesterday, his Excellency did not ask for any further explanations on the point mentioned by Count Andrassy, namely, the connection of the question of exclusive Russian influence in the Balkan Peninsula with that of the occupation or possession of Constantinople by Russia.

Should Count Andrassy revert to the subject, you may state that Her Majesty's Government agree in the general principles laid down in his Excellency's despatch.

Doc. 664 *Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 15, at night.)*

(Telegraphic.)

(Most Confidential.)

Vienna, June 15, 1877, 5:30 P.M.

IN consequence of Count Andrassy having been unable to fix an hour to receive me at the Foreign Office, he has just called at the Embassy. He said that the Russian Ambassador acquainted him yesterday with the Russian terms of peace, which were the same as those I had communicated to him, with the exception that Roumania is to receive a compensation for Bessarabia in the Dobrutscha, whether she becomes independent or remains a vassal of the Porte. He is of opinion that the terms would not be accepted by the Porte, except under extreme pressure, but he thinks they might be made the basis of a transaction, and he hopes, therefore, that Her Majesty's Government will not express a decided opinion against them until they receive a statement, which he is preparing, of his views in writing, and in which an answer will be given to a question he said your Lordship had addressed to Count Beust as to whether Austria considered that Russia should be trusted to occupy Constantinople provisionally.

I then said that, personally, I doubted more than ever the power of the Russian Government to maintain a promise on that subject, as Slavonic pressure appeared already to have led the proposed terms of peace to be modified by a declaration that the whole of Bulgaria—doubtless with the limits proposed by General Ignatiev at Constantinople—must be included in autonomous state to be created, and I recited to him your Lordship's telegram of yesterday, acquainting me with this change in the Russian proposals. He said that the Russian Ambassador here had not as yet made any allusion to such a change which would, of course, increase the difficulty of an eventual arrangement. He would, however, express his opinion on it in the despatch he is preparing, as, with a view to England and Austria coming to a satisfactory understanding with each other, he thinks it unadvisable to state their views imperfectly by telegraph on so important and complicated a subject, whereas his opinions on each point which has been raised will be given clearly in his despatch, which he will com-

municate to me when it is ready for transmission to London. He could not, however, say how soon he would be able to do so.

He does not understand why there is no reference to the Dardanelles in the Russian proposals.

Doc. 665 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 15, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Secret.)

Vienna, June 15, 1877, 6.15 P.M.

I DID not allude in my conversation with Count Andrassy to-day to the subject of the personal information communicated to me in a telegram from your Lordship yesterday, as he merely mentioned the question put to him through Count Beust about Constantinople. It appeared to me, however, that he felt conscious that there were some grounds for your Lordship's observations to Count Beust respecting relations of Austria and Russia, and that he might be suspected of not having been entirely ignorant of the nature of the Russian proposals before I communicated them to him.

Doc. 666

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 212. Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 15, 1877.

THE Austrian Ambassador told me to-day that he had received from Count Andrassy a telegram stating that M. de Novikoff had communicated to the Austrian Government on the 14th instant the Russian proposals as regards possible conditions of peace, of which you had informed Count Andrassy on the previous day. M. de Novikoff seems to have inquired whether Count Andrassy had already heard of these proposals from Her Majesty's Government, and upon the latter replying in the affirmative expressed himself surprised, as he was under the impression that I had promised secrecy on the subject to Count Schouvaloff.

I explained to Count Beust that I had kept the communication secret, and had not felt myself at liberty to mention it to him. Count Schouvaloff, however, having subsequently informed me that it had been communicated by his own Government to that of Austria, I had then telegraphed to your Excellency to ask whether the communication had been made, and what view the Austrian Government took of the proposed terms. The instructions to M. de Novikoff had apparently not reached him till twenty-four hours later.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 667 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 16.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Confidential.)

Vienna, June 16, 1877.

MINISTER for Foreign Affairs has not come to town to-day, but in consequence of some observations he made yesterday I have thought it expedient to mention to Baron Orczy that your Lordship had stated in reply to my telegram of the 11th instant that Her Majesty's Government agree in the general principles on the subject of the connection between the question of excluding the influence of Russia in the Balkan Peninsula with that of her occupying or possessing Constantinople.

I said at the same time that Count Andrassy seemed to consider yesterday that there was some foundation for an observation of M. de Novikoff that if Russia engaged not to occupy Constantinople she might be unable to force the Porte to make peace, but it appeared to me on the other hand that the power of England and Austria to prevent occupation of Constantinople offered the most effective means by which those Powers could exercise their influence on the conditions of peace.

Doc. 668

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 213. Most Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 16, 1877.

THE Austrian Ambassador called upon me this afternoon and communicated to me, in strict confidence, the substance of a telegram which he had received from Count Andrassy in answer to the questions I had requested him on the 13th instant to put to his Excellency, as stated in my despatch to you No. 204 of that date.

Count Andrassy states that the confidence of the Austrian Government in the promises of Russia is not absolute. He promises to communicate with perfect clearness to Her Majesty's Government the means by which the reciprocal interests of England and Austria can, in his opinion, be protected under all circumstances; but he observes that it is difficult to give a positive assurance in reply to a special question. For the moment, his Excellency adds, he can only repeat what he had said to you yesterday, namely, that in his opinion England ought in each phase of the question to avoid rejecting the proposals of Russia, and to make them the basis of fresh negotiations.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 669

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 215A. Most Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 19, 1877.

IN a confidential conversation which I held this day with the Austrian Ambassador I pressed earnestly upon his Excellency the importance of some action being taken by his Government with a view of preventing terms of peace being imposed on the Porte which would be permanently injurious to Austrian interests. I reminded Count Beust that, according to the latest version of the Russian scheme, a semi-independent Bulgarian State—which, as a matter of fact, would be a Russian dependency—was meant to extend for a considerable distance south of the Balkans; that that line of defence would in consequence cease to exist; that all the Turkish fortresses within the territory thus set apart were to be destroyed or made over; and, therefore, that the road to Constantinople would lie open and unguarded whenever a Russian army was ordered to march there.

It was impossible, I said, that such a proposal could be favourably viewed by Austria. It might be that Count Andrassy relied on the opposition of other Powers; but, without in any way committing the Government of which I was a member, I did not hesitate to express it as my personal opinion that England would be reluctant to enter into a second Crimean war without an ally.

An Austrian refusal to co-operate might, therefore, very probably lead to, and justify, inaction on our part; whereas, if the two countries acted together, there was not only no doubt of success, but no danger of war, since Russia would not provoke the hostility of two leading Powers while already engaged in hostilities.

Count Beust appeared to acquiesce in this view, and promised to report what I had said to his Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 670

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 22.)

(No. 599. Very Confidential.)

My Lord,

Therapia, June 11, 1877.

SAFVET PASHA asked me this morning whether the rumours that Russia was not indisposed to make peace had, in my opinion, any foundation. I replied that I had received no information which led me to believe that they were well founded. Had overtures, I said, been made to him from any quarter on the subject of peace? His Excellency answered that he could not say that overtures had been made, but Count Zichy had once or twice sounded him as to whether Turkey would be disposed to come to terms with Russia, and whether, if a favourable opportunity offered for bringing the war to an end, she would be willing to accept the mediation of Austria.

He had expressed to Count Zichy his thanks for this proof of the friendly disposition of Austria, but had refrained from committing himself to any kind of pledge in the matter.

As Prince Reuss had just left Safvet Pasha, after a very long interview with him, I asked his Excellency whether the subject of peace or mediation had been referred to by the German Ambassador. His Excellency replied that Prince Reuss had spoken in general terms about the war, which, he said, his Government greatly deplored, and had done their utmost to prevent.

The Emperor of Russia, Prince Reuss had observed, could not be expected to listen to proposals for peace from any quarter until his armies had achieved some signal success, which would enable him to justify to his people the vast sacrifices that they had been called upon to make in going to war. The German Ambassador, his Excellency added, had warned him that when the time for settling the terms of peace came, Turkey must be prepared to resign herself to the conditions which might be offered to her.

I inquired of Safvet Pasha whether Prince Reuss had in any way hinted what those conditions might be. His Excellency replied in the negative, adding that the Prince was "très-boutonné," and had confined himself to speaking in very general terms on the subject. All that could be gathered from his language was the impression that Germany intended, sooner or later, to step in, and to arrange, if not to dictate, the terms of a peace with Russia, which, his Excellency observed, he feared would be little favourable to Turkey.

In conversing with Prince Reuss I have endeavoured to ascertain what his views were as to the conditions to be imposed upon Turkey should Russia, after obtaining a decisive success, be disposed to make peace. He appears to me to think that Russia has a kind of right to Batoum, which, he said, was the natural port for the possessions of Russia in the Caucasus and Georgia. He did not seem to consider that Turkey might also have a natural right to a port which gave access to Armenia, and that Russia had other means of reaching her Caucasian provinces. The Prince argued that Russia has a further right to the freedom of navigation of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles for her Black Sea fleet, which is now cut off from the Mediterranean, and that the interests of England could in no way be affected by the enforcement of this right.

As regards the occupation of Bulgaria, or any other part of Turkey in Europe, the Prince seems to think that Russia will not insist upon it, except for a limited period, unless unforeseen circumstances render it absolutely necessary, but that she will naturally require some satisfactory guarantee for the better government of the Christian Slav populations, as she had gone to war for that purpose.

These may be but Prince Reuss' personal opinions and views, but I have considered them worth mentioning to your Lordship, as they seem, as far as I can judge, to be in accordance with the information which Her Majesty's Government have received from Berlin.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Doc. 671
(No. 221. Secret.)

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 23, 1877.

THE Austrian Ambassador called upon me to-day, and said that a messenger left Vienna yesterday with a detailed despatch from Count Andrassy in reply to the inquiry which I addressed to Count Beust respecting the course which would be followed by the Austro-Hungarian Government in the event of an occupation of Constantinople by the Russian forces, and of which I informed your Excellency in my despatch No. 204 of the 13th instant.

Count Beust informed me, in the strictest confidence, that the following was the summary of the despatch :—

That the Austrian Government do not think that it is the intention of Russia to occupy Constantinople, even temporarily. (The reasons for this opinion will be found in Count Andrassy's despatch.)

On the other hand, they can readily understand the reasons of Russia for declining to give a promise beforehand to that effect.

The Austro-Hungarian Government have confidence in the Russian promises. If, however, Russia were, in opposition to her promises, to manifest the intention of

keeping Constantinople, they would be obliged to look upon such an act as a *casus belli*, and to act in consequence.

That in such a case it would, however, only be loyal to give, together with the Cabinet of St. James's, due notice of their intention to Russia at the moment when the entry of her armies into Constantinople should have become probable.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 672

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 233. Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 23, 1877.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 612, Most Confidential, of the 13th instant, referring to the terms of peace which his Excellency Count Schouvaloff has stated that Russia would be ready to accept if peace is concluded before her armies cross the Balkans, and which I communicated to you by telegraph on the 12th instant; and I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government had no intention of instructing you either to propose these conditions of peace to the Porte or to support them. They were communicated to you for your confidential information only, and in order that you might report your observations on them to Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 673

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 25.)

(No. 329. Most Confidential.)

My Lord,

St. Petersburg, June 20, 1877.

I HAVE read with great interest, and not without some surprise, the Memorandum of a confidential conversation with your Lordship by Count Schouvaloff, recording the substance of his instructions on the possible terms of peace between Russia and Turkey.

In that document is shadowed forth, for the first time, the possibility of the Russian forces being constrained to advance to Constantinople, although with assurances that under no circumstances would the Russians remain there.

But in a conversation on another occasion, which is recorded in your Lordship's despatch No. 225 of June 11, Count Schouvaloff admitted that he had no expectation that the conditions of peace to which he referred would be accepted by the Porte until the Turkish Government had learned by a painful experience (probably the occupation of the capital) how inadequate their means of resistance were; stating also that "the object of his Government was not so much that Her Majesty's Government should use their endeavours to press the conditions of peace upon Turkey, but rather to ensure the neutrality of England."

Count Schouvaloff refers to the essential object of the war, which he defines for Russia as consisting in the complete subjugation of Turkey, on the one hand, and in protecting the Christians, especially those in Bulgaria, against the abuses of Turkish administration, on the other.

But, in the conditions of peace submitted by Count Schouvaloff, it is stated that, should the Porte sue for peace before the Russians cross the Balkans, Russia reserved to herself the right of stipulating for certain other advantages for herself as compensation for the expenses of the war.

In the face of the most positive assurances given by the Emperor that he sought no aggrandizement or extension of territory, the restoration of the ceded portion of Bessarabia and the cession of Batoum are mentioned as compensation to be claimed by Russia.

Roumania is also to be rewarded for her services to Russia by the acquisition of the Dobrudscha, and an indefinite compensation is suggested for Austria-Hungary in Bosnia and the Herzegovina.

Anything more vague, more insidious, or in greater contradiction to the object of the war and the assurances of the Emperor, cannot be imagined, nor is their real object concealed with the usual skill of Russian diplomacy, for it is avowed "qu'il importe à l'Empereur de savoir si dans ces limites indiqués il peut être assuré de la neutralité de

l'Angleterre, neutralité qui excluerait une occupation même temporaire de Constantinople et des Détroits par cette Puissance."

The object of Prince Gortchakow has been for some time directed to a complete obliteration of the Treaty of Paris, and to wipe out the humiliation under which Russia was placed.

Nothing could more effectually carry out this object than the proposals which Count Schouvaloff has submitted to your Lordship.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Doc. 674 *Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 25.)*

(No. 330. Very Confidential.)

My Lord,

St. Petersburg, June 20, 1877.

SINCE the departure of the Emperor and Prince Gortchakow for the seat of war, there is a complete stagnation here in regard to any political or diplomatic action.

Little is known as to events passing on the Danube, or of the military operations in Asia, except the meagre intelligence conveyed to the public by the official telegrams from the Commander-in-chief.

The passage of the Danube has been delayed in consequence of the late floods, and it is reported that it cannot take place earlier than the 25th instant.

The opinion entertained here of the hope and intention of signing a peace at Constantinople is daily gaining ground, and is openly discussed by the Russian press.

The temporary occupation of that capital is represented as the deserved fruits of a victorious campaign, and as a necessary evidence to the Mussulman population of Turkish defeat.

Nor will it have escaped your Lordship's observation that, in the late communication from the Imperial Government, not only is there no assurance given that the Russian forces will not advance to Constantinople, but evidence is not wanting to prove that such is their ultimate intention.

The chief object of the Russian explanations, as lately communicated to your Lordship by Count Schouvaloff, appears to me to be solely directed to calm and pacify the fears of England, and to occupy public attention with pacific assurances until it should be too late for any preventive military action on the part of Great Britain.

It is my firm belief that, if England maintains a passive attitude until the Russian armies pass the Balkans, and that Russia is thereby secured from a previous occupation of Constantinople by an English force, the diplomatic language of Russia will assume a very different tone, and the conditions of peace will be of a far more onerous nature.

I am disposed to believe that the Russian Government are not unprepared for a possible occupation of Constantinople by England, not for Turkish but for British interests, and that such a measure, if represented as bearing no act of hostility to Russia, will not be considered as a *casus belli*, although it will naturally produce a feeling of bitter disappointment.

The question is whether England or Russia shall first occupy Constantinople?

If we do not occupy Constantinople and the Dardanelles they will be inevitably occupied by the Russians, and who can foresee what may be the duration or consequences of such an occupation.

Take, for instance, the position of the Dardanelles. I am told that it could be rendered impregnable at a very small expense, and form a second Gibraltar. Should it fall into Russian hands can any assurance by Russia be relied on that she will not retain it permanently? It is yet time to prevent the possibility of Russia acquiring this important position. Her armies under the most favourable circumstances could, after crossing the Danube, scarcely reach the Dardanelles or Constantinople under two or probably three months, nor could they, in view of military exigencies for the maintenance of their communications and for masking the Turkish fortresses, do so with any considerable force.

I rather believe that the knowledge by Russia of an occupation of Constantinople and the Dardanelles by England would lead them at once to abandon any intention of proceeding further than Adrianople, and that negotiations for peace would then be opened.

The position of England under such circumstances would be most favourable, and we could more readily come to an understanding with Russia as to the future of Turkey than if we had abstained from all military action.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Doc. 675 *Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received June 25.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.)

Vienna, June 25, 1877, 4.15 P.M.

FROM Baron Orczy's answer to a question which I put to him to-day, Count Andrassy does not appear to have received as yet a report from Count Beust of your Lordship's confidential conversation with his Excellency of the 19th instant; and from the wish expressed by your Lordship as to the use to be made of previous information furnished to me of your communications with Count Beust, I have not felt authorized to acquaint Count Andrassy with the language which you held on that occasion to the Austrian Ambassador.

Count Andrassy has been confined to his room for some days, but came to town to-day to see the Emperor. He has not yet authorized M. Orczy to show me his despatch to Count Beust, which was probably communicated to your Lordship to-day.

Doc. 676

Count Andrassy to Count Beust.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Count Beust, June 25.)

(Secret.)

Vienna, June 22, 1877.

OUR point of view has been fixed in principle in my despatch of May 29. I gather from your Excellency's report that a twofold exception is likely to be taken against it. In the first place the British Cabinet does not seem inclined to place confidence in the Russian assurances; in the second place it believes that it would be very difficult to interpose by anything more substantial than words, if we once were confronted by accomplished facts, or if a Treaty of peace were concluded, or were in course of negotiation; and that, consequently, in order to prevent this, it would be necessary to check Russia at the Balkans.

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Doc. 677

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 7.)

(No. 582. Very Confidential.)

My Lord,

Paris, July 6, 1877.

IN the despatches marked No. 574 and No. 575, which I had the honour to send to your Lordship by post on the day before yesterday, I reported to you, without comment, observations made by the Duc Decazes on the Russian terms of peace as stated to him by Count Münster, and on the despatch of the English fleet to Besika Bay.

In fact the language of the Duc Decazes simply confirmed the impressions with regard to the policy of France on the Eastern question, which I have recorded in numerous previous despatches.

France wishes an end to be put to the war because she fears it will paralyse Russia and other Powers, to whom she looks for help against Germany.

She desires so to direct her own course as to offend no foreign Power, but she is especially anxious not to offend Russia.

She is comparatively indifferent to Russian progress in the East, and would view with quite as much jealousy an increase of English as an increase of Russian influence in the eastern part of the Mediterranean.

She has no inclination to give any assistance, moral or material, to England in resisting Russian encroachments or in obtaining a counterpoise to them.

She thinks it possible that England may be forced into an alliance defensive and offensive with her against Germany by a German attack upon Holland and Belgium.

and she is unremitting in her endeavours to spread the opinion in England that such an attack is probable.

Even in such a contingency she does not seem to contemplate an alliance with England unless she herself is actually threatened with invasion, nor does she appear to admit that under any circumstances she could be called upon to displease Russia by forwarding English interests in the Levant.

I do not conceive that these views proceed from any ill-will to England or any special partiality to Russia, they are the natural consequences of the position in which France has been placed by the results of her war with Germany. All other considerations have no weight with her in comparison with her anxiety for safety for the present from a German attack, or with her aspirations after a recovery, in the future, of her lost provinces.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

Doc. 678 Mr. Macdonell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 9.)

(No. 275. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Berlin, July 2, 1877.

I HAD the honour to advise your Lordship this day, by telegraph, that Prince Bismarck had expressed the opinion that, at this moment, he sees no cause for the general alarm felt in Germany with regard to the crisis in France, and that his Highness had noticed with regret the over-zealous and violent attacks made upon that country by the German press.

It is natural to infer therefrom that this Government will, for the present, whilst watching closely the electoral movement, direct the newspapers to moderate their tone.

The Chancellor, however, appeared less pleased with the aspect of affairs in Turkey.

His Highness expressed anxiety at the fresh complications which appear to beset the Eastern question, and seemed desirous, in concert with Her Majesty's Government, to guard against their acquiring more serious proportions.

Prince Bismarck is most desirous to see Lord Odo Russell, who is expected to return to Berlin this evening.

The above information was derived from a most reliable source.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. G. MACDONELL.

Doc. 679 Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 9.)

(No. 280. Secret.)

My Lord,

Berlin, July 6, 1877.

IN obedience to your Lordship's verbal instructions to me on the 26th ultimo, I asked Prince Bismarck to-day what he thought of the Russian peace proposals, communicated confidentially by Count Schouvaloff to your Lordship on the 8th ultimo.

Prince Bismarck replied that he would approve any terms of peace on which England and Russia, as well as Austria were agreed, but that he was afraid that Turkey was not yet willing to listen to reason.

He would exert all the influence he possessed to facilitate an amicable agreement between England and Russia, and he believed the Russian peace proposals to be perfectly sincere; but until he knew how they were viewed by Her Majesty's Government, he could do nothing towards bringing about an agreement.

If, therefore, Her Majesty's Government would answer the Russian communication in detail, and state their wishes, he would gladly give them his best support in the interest of peace.

I said that in the last conversation I had had with the Earl of Beaconsfield on the 26th ultimo, his Lordship had requested me to point out confidentially to his Highness that two of the most important questions for England were those concerning Constantinople and the navigation of the Straits, and that Her Majesty's Government reckoned

on the support of Germany in maintaining the sovereignty of the Sultan at Constantinople, and the principles which regulated the navigation of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles.

The Premier, I said, was prepared to advise Her Majesty the Queen to send the fleet to Gallipoli, not necessarily to encourage or to coerce the belligerents, but to be present on the spot and ready to guard and maintain the interests of England when the day of settlement was at hand.

Prince Bismarck replied that such a measure would greatly facilitate peace later on, when the belligerents were exhausted and ready to treat; but at present, and as matters now stood, he thought it might encourage the resistance of Turkey, and prolong the war.

Turkey was not yet beaten, and Russia, flushed with the success of her passage of the Danube, would not be satisfied without a victory. Until then he looked upon all attempts at a pacification as hopeless.

He now agreed with Austria in thinking that Russia and Turkey must fight out their quarrel before the Powers could successfully concert a settlement of the Turkish question. He believed the assurances given by the Czar to Her Majesty's Government, and to his uncle, the German Emperor, that Russia would not take possession of Constantinople, and he looked upon the peace proposals, submitted by Count Schouvaloff to your Lordship on the 8th June, as the sincere expression of the wishes and intentions of the Russian Government.

He felt sure that any counter propositions Her Majesty's Government had to make would be favourably met by Russia, whose anxious desire it was to keep on terms of friendship with England; and if Her Majesty's Government would communicate such counter propositions to him, he would give them all the support in his power, and he could do so with the more effect since Germany wanted nothing for herself but peace, and the maintenance of the European concert.

He considered the promise of the Czar not to take possession of Constantinople as a solemn engagement contracted with the Guaranteeing Powers, and he thought the navigation of the Straits could only be regulated by them, and not by Russia and Turkey alone.

He hoped Her Majesty's Government would answer the Russian communication and "take act" officially of the proposals they would consent to, and would state what changes they were not prepared to sanction, so that a clear basis could be established on which to negotiate a lasting European agreement and a permanent, sound, and satisfactory settlement of the Turkish question. Germany had no other interest in the matter but peace, and was otherwise absolutely disinterested in the mode of settlement, and he took this opportunity of protesting against the insinuations of his enemies that he wanted to annex Holland or Bohemia, or any other portion of Europe to the German Empire.

On the other hand, if the interests of great nations required the annexation of territory, he was the first to approve; and he had therefore heard with surprise from Count Münster that Her Majesty's Government were averse to taking possession of the road to India through Egypt, which, in the interest of Great Britain and of the commercial world, should, in his opinion, be now transferred from the suzerainty of the Sultan of Turkey to that of the Empress of India.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 680 *Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received July 8.)
(Telegraphic.)
(Secret.)

Vienna, July 7, 1877, 2.45 P.M.

IN a private and confidential conversation with well-informed Austrian gentleman, he said that if Count Andrassy had changed the policy he wished to pursue five years ago with respect to Turkey, it is because he could not look to Her Majesty's Government for support to it, and he had, therefore, to make the best arrangements he could for the protection of Austrian interests, whilst obliged to make large concessions to Russian ambition.

My informant said that the Emperor, with whom he had had a recent interview, regretted the inevitable advantages which Russia must gain from the course which the Eastern question is taking; but that His Majesty seemed to find consolation in

the hope that as the arrangements which may be made in consequence of the war will have a permanent character, they may be more advantageous to Austria than uncertainty with respect to the future of a merely patching-up (*replatrage*) of the relations between the Porte and its Christian subjects.

Doc. 681 *Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 8.)*

(Telegraphic.)

(Very Confidential.)

Vienna, July 7, 1877, 4.30 P.M.

I HAVE seen Count Andrassy, who had just obtained the approval of the Emperor of a telegram to be sent to-night to Count Beust.

It declines, for reasons given, the signature of a Protocol, but I believe states again clearly and distinctly the views and intentions of Austria.

His Excellency stated to me that as he has hitherto in his communications with Russia acted separately, a (joint?) action between England and Austria is now impossible until Russia is false to her promises, for as it would be unbecoming in a gentleman to threaten another with the interference of a third party if he should after all keep his word, it would be equally so in Austria to threaten Russia, with support expected from England, to induce her to maintain her engagements.

He said also that, as he has stated clearly to Her Majesty's Government what he cannot assent to as injurious to Austrian interests, and has declared that he is prepared, if necessary, to defend them by war, he cannot understand why your Lordship should wish for a Protocol.

Doc. 682 *Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 8.)*

(Telegraphic.)

(Secret.)

Vienna, July 7, 1877.

COUNT ANDRASSY'S language at my interview with him, reported in a previous telegram to-day, was so rambling that I found it difficult to understand whether, in his objections to a Protocol, he merely referred to his understanding with Russia or not also to that with Her Majesty's Government, as in representing a Protocol as far as the latter is concerned to be unnecessary, he said that he had never deceived any one. He appeared to be dissatisfied with Count Beust, as he said that he had been instructed to communicate his telegram to-day, in original, to your Lordship that there may be no misunderstanding as to his views, but that he neither knows how Count Beust has translated his previous despatches, nor has he told him what the English Government intends to do. I suspect also that he thinks that there is a disposition in London to put Austria forward as the leader in any action which may be taken against Russia, a suspicion the existence of which has been confirmed to me from another source. Under these circumstances, I venture to suggest that if Her Majesty's Government are satisfied with the declaration or assurances in the telegram Count Andrassy forwards to-day, the best way to arrive at a satisfactory arrangement might be to recapitulate them, and express satisfaction with them in a despatch to myself, with instructions, if Count Andrassy wishes it, to leave a copy with him, and to state that, in consequence of Her Majesty's Government trusting to being supported in certain eventualities by action of Austria, as explained in Count Andrassy's despatch to Count Beust, they had decided to carry out the measures (whatever they may be) which they consider most expedient for preventing the occupation of, or securing the evacuation of, Constantinople and the exclusion of ships of war from the Dardanelles and Bosphorus, for which I think that Count [Andrassy?] considers the present regulations should be maintained.

He reminded me of his proposal to England through Lord Lytton in 1871, and though he has apparently entered into an understanding with Russia, which he intends loyally to keep until he believes she is deceiving him, he said that "we are not asleep, and we are ready for every contingency," a statement which, I may add, was made to me some days ago by the Minister of War. He evidently considered passage of the Balkan as not likely to be immediate.

Doc. 683

Count Andrassy to Count Beust.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Count Beust, July 9.)

(Télégraphique.)

(Secrète et Confidentielle.)

J'AI reçu l'expédition du courrier. Votre tâche n'était pas délicate, elle vous a été au contraire tracée d'une manière claire et précise. Notre intention n'était pas de faire patienter le Cabinet Anglais mais de préciser les intérêts communs et de déterminer les conséquences que les deux Puissances ne sauraient accepter. Ce résultat a été obtenu par l'échange d'idées qui a eu lieu et nous maintenons mot pour mot tout ce que nous avons dit. Nous sommes également prêts à ajouter aux points que nous avons articulés les réserves Anglaises relatives au passage des Dardanelles. Nous nous contentons d'une simple déclaration du Cabinet Anglais portant que tels sont les points sur lesquels il est décidé à ne pas céder. Nous sommes de notre côté prêts à faire la même déclaration et comme nous n'admettons pas de doute dans la sincérité de nos parôles nous n'irons pas au-delà. En même temps nous constaterions que nous n'avons aucune raison de supposer que la Russie ne respecterait pas nos intérêts, mais que si à la suite de l'imprévu et de la force majeure nos intérêts se trouvaient cependant menacés nous les défendrions au besoin les armes à la main soit seuls, soit conjointement avec l'Angleterre. Dans le premier cas notre action se réglerait selon les exigences de notre situation; dans la dernière éventualité nous pourrions nous concerter le moment donné sur une action commune.

Nous ne pourrions consentir à la rédaction d'un Protocole tel qu'il a été proposé par Lord Derby pour les raisons suivantes:—Comme votre Excellence a vu par ma dépêche du 29 Mai la mission Soumarokoff a servi à éclaircir notre point de vue vis-à-vis de la Russie, nous avons décliné la proposition d'une action combinée contre la Turquie, mais en même temps il fallait encore prévenir une collision avec la Russie et sauvegarder chacun de nos intérêts. C'est pour cela que nous avons fait connaître au Gouvernement Russe celles des conséquences de la guerre que nous ne pourrions pas accepter et en même temps nous avons déclaré que nous ne prendrions pas une attitude hostile en présence de la Russie allant en avant, si celle-ci nous promettait de respecter nos intérêts. Cette promesse a été donnée et jusqu'à présent nous n'avons aucune raison de mettre en doute sa sincérité.

Dans cet état de choses nous pouvons bien déclarer nos intérêts solidaires avec ceux d'une Puissance tierce et que nous les défendrions les armes à la main dans le cas où ils seraient compromis. Par contre, tant que la Russie ne nous a fourni aucune raison d'en agir ainsi un engagement pour une action guerrière constituerait aujourd'hui un acte d'hostilité que Sa Majesté l'Empereur ne saurait concilier avec ses sentiments de loyauté lors même que la Russie n'en apprenait jamais rien.

Enfin nous ne pouvons pas nous exposer à devoir répondre par un mensonge à une interpellation du Gouvernement Russe ou de notre Parlement, nous demandant si nous sommes engagés dans une alliance offensive et défensive. Ce sont là les raisons qui nous obligent à décliner la rédaction d'un Protocole.

Si le Cabinet Anglais apprécie les raisons qui nous font agir, voici quel serait le *modus procedendi*. Les deux Puissances ayant constaté quelles sont les conséquences de la guerre qu'elles regardent toutes les deux comme inadmissibles, s'engageraient chacune pour elle seule, et sans se réclamer de l'autre, de faire valoir de cas en cas par voie diplomatique les intérêts reconnus solidaires. Si dans le courant des événements des intérêts reconnus solidaires allaient être exposés de fait à être compromis alors le moment serait venu de se concerter selon les exigences de la situation sur une action matérielle combinée à l'effet de prévenir ce danger.

Voilà notre point de vue qui se trouve en parfaite conformité avec toutes les ouvertures que nous avons faites jusqu'à présent. Nous ne pouvons pas aller plus loin, et nous ne rétractons pas un mot de ce que nous avons dit.

Votre Excellence voudra communiquer à Lord Derby la substance de ce télégramme.

Doc. 684

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 293. Secret.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 11, 1877.

I INCLOSE, for your Excellency's own information, copies of a correspondence which Her Majesty's Government have entered into with the Government of Austro-

Hungary respecting the policy to be observed in certain contingencies of the war between Russia and Turkey.

Your Excellency will be good enough to treat this correspondence as most strictly confidential, and will take care not to refer to it in any communication with your diplomatic colleagues or with the Porte.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 685

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 242. Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 11, 1877.

THE Austrian Ambassador having called upon me to-day, I stated to his Excellency that before proceeding further in regard to the record of the understanding arrived at between Her Majesty's Government and the Austro-Hungarian Government as to the policy to be observed in certain contingencies of the war in Turkey, it seemed to me highly desirable that we should leave no possibility of misapprehension as to the precise nature of the points on which we were agreed.

I then read to his Excellency the paragraph from Count Andrassy's despatch of the 29th of May, in which it is stated that the Government of Austria-Hungary cannot consent to certain measures, and among these, "No large Slav State should be established at the expense of the non-Slav elements of the Balkan Peninsula, and in any case the reconstruction should be limited at most to the autonomy of the present provinces under a native Chief." And I asked whether his Excellency's Government still held this view after having learned the proposed Russian terms of peace, which included the establishment of a vassal autonomous province extending south of the Balkans, the destruction of the Turkish fortresses, and the creation of a local military force.

It seemed to me, I said, that this would evidently be the creation of a large Slav State at the expense of the other populations inhabiting the districts which it would comprise, and I thought it would be well that his Excellency should ascertain from his Government whether this proposal of the Russian Government contained in Count Schouvaloff's Memorandum of the 8th of June was deemed by them to be compatible with the declaration made by Count Andrassy in his despatch of the 29th of May.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 686

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 244. Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 12, 1877.

THE Austrian Ambassador called upon me this afternoon and read to me a telegram which he had received from Count Andrassy, commenting on some remarks made by your Excellency in conversation with Baron Orczy.

Count Andrassy understood your Excellency to have said that the reason why Her Majesty's Government were anxious to place on record in a Protocol, or in some other written form, the agreement between England and Austria as to their mutual interests, was because Parliament would not be likely to vote the supplies necessary for any active measures unless previously assured of the co-operation of some other Power. That, on the other hand, Her Majesty's Government were convinced that a joint caution addressed to Russia by England and Austria-Hungary would always be sufficient to check Russia without the necessity of having recourse to war.

In reply to these observations, Count Beust is instructed to state that, according to the view taken by the Austrian Government, any direct reference by one Power to the other, or any mention in the British Parliament of an understanding hostile to Russia having been arrived at between Austria and England is absolutely precluded.

Your Excellency is further said to have observed that in case our wish for a written agreement were not acceded to, or were only acceded to in vague phrases, Her Majesty's Government would feel themselves compelled to abandon the idea of an

eventual appeal to arms, and would then confine themselves to taking precautionary measures.

In reply to which Count Andrassy states that the Austrian Government would certainly prefer that England should confine herself to taking measures of precaution rather than that Austria should run the risk of being used for the purpose of intimidating Russia before the latter Power had given her any serious reason for hostile action.

I told Count Beust that I thought there must be some misunderstanding as to the language you were said to have held. You had received no instructions to speak in that sense, nor had you reported any conversation of the tenor he had described. And in regard especially to what was reported to have been said of a possible declaration in Parliament, it had been quite understood on the part of Her Majesty's Government that the negotiations were secret and they had been carefully kept so so far as we were concerned.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 687

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 245. Most Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 14, 1877.

THE Austrian Ambassador called upon me to-day and left confidentially in my hands the translation of a telegram which he had received from his Government, and which is to the following effect:—

The Russian conditions of peace, Count Andrassy says, as originally presented by Count Schouvaloff, are not inconsistent with the seventh of the points laid down in his Excellency's despatch of May 29. Some sort of autonomy, he argues, must be conceded to Bulgaria in case the Porte is definitively worsted, although he thinks it would be difficult to grant it in the way foreshadowed in the Russian proposals. In any case, however, the Austrian Government adhere to the second point mentioned in the despatch above referred to, stipulating that no definitive settlement shall be arrived at without the concurrence of all the Powers. With regard to the pretension which has since been advanced to constitute an autonomous Bulgaria extending across the Balkans, Count Andrassy says that he has already stated to M. de Novikoff that the Austrian Government would require explanations on this point, as they considered the creation of so large a Slavonic State in the Balkan Peninsula, absorbing as it would do large non-Slavonic populations, to be inadmissible. He had added that Austria reserved to herself the right to an authoritative voice on the subject at the close of the war.

As regards the manner of procedure, Count Andrassy suggests that England might declare from her own point of view, as Austria has already done and will do again from hers, her objections to the creation of a too extended Bulgaria, or Her Majesty's Government might lay down the principle that nothing can be definitively settled in regard to such matters without the participation of the Powers generally.

Count Andrassy further states that the Austrian Government have not the slightest intention of inducing England to abstain from action. Their only desire, his Excellency says, has been to define those eventualities in which England could also count upon the co-operation of Austria, but they in no way wish to prevent Her Majesty's Government from taking any step which might be thought expedient for the protection of British interests, the less so as they had reserved to themselves the same freedom of action if the necessity should arise.

Some conversation took place between Count Beust and myself, in the course of which I expressed, on the part of Her Majesty's Government, the satisfaction which we felt at Count Andrassy's distinct statement that the creation of an autonomous Bulgaria extending south of the Balkans would be regarded by Austria as inadmissible. I added that from the communications which we had received from the Russian Government there would appear to be no doubt that the Emperor of Russia contemplated the creation of such a State, and it would probably be necessary to leave no doubt as to the objection entertained by Austria to such a proposal.

With regard to the latter part of the telegram referring to the mode of procedure proposed by the Austrian Government, I said that there was no wish on our part to make difficulties as to matters of form and procedure if we were substantially agreed as to what was to be done. I did not clearly understand what was the form of declaration which Count Andrassy had proposed in the telegram communicated to me on the

8th instant, and I therefore threw out the suggestion that it might be well if Count Andrassy would send me, through Count Beust, a draft of the declaration which he was prepared to sign. His Excellency and I could then examine it together, and if we agreed on the question of form a similar declaration might be signed on the part of Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 688 *Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received July 14.)
(Telegraphic.)
(Most Confidential.)

Vienna, July 14, 1877.

BARON ORCZY having told me yesterday that Count Andrassy seems to consider seventh point in his despatch of the 29th May, respecting which your Lordship has asked for explanations sufficiently clear, and that his Excellency is very decided as to the correctness of his policy as explained in his despatches to Count Beust, I urged that where a *casus belli* is in question, Her Majesty's Government may fairly expect it to be so clearly defined as to leave no doubt how far they can reckon on Austrian co-operation, and that no point should be susceptible of two interpretations. I said I fully appreciated Count Andrassy's unwillingness to show distrust in the promises of the Emperor of Russia, or as an honest man himself to doubt honesty of others; but so many cases had occurred in Central Asia of the Emperor's orders having been set aside by his agents, or as Lord Cardwell once observed, "by satraps more powerful than himself," that it might be doubted whether His Majesty could successfully resist will of the revolutionary party whose influence has been so great in promoting the present war. I asked him whether Count Andrassy considered the Proclamation to the Bulgarians consistent with the promises of Russia, or that Prince Gortchakow had kept faith with him when he supported the insurgents in refusing to accept provisions of Count Andrassy's note. I asked also how many examples there were in which a knowledge that certain eventualities would be resisted by war would have prevented the occurrence, but which, having been allowed to occur, could not be remedied without war, Governments being able to abstain doing what national honour and feeling would prevent their undoing.

An old and intimate friend of mine, who is a confidential secretary to Count Andrassy, having dined with me afterwards, I acquainted him with what I had said to M. Orczy, and advised him to show (and) point out to Count Andrassy that, though he may feel entire confidence in the success of his own policy and his optimistic way of looking at question, that he should not be surprised at Her Majesty's Government thinking that it is too serious a matter for him to embark in without certainty that they understand clearly under what circumstances they will be entitled to claim co-operation of Austria.

I said also that if Count Andrassy was well enough to see me, I was ready to give personally my reasons for (these) opinions.

As far as I can ascertain, military men here consider passage of Balkans before the winter improbable, unless a turning force from the Upper Danube can reach Sophia or the Turks risk a great battle in the plain.

Doc. 689 *Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received July 16.)

(No. 568. Confidential.)
My Lord,

Vienna, July 6, 1877.

I WAS informed to-day by the Under-Secretary of State that an Act is being prepared at Schönbrunn with reference to your Lordship's wishes that the understanding between the two Governments respecting eventualities in Turkey should be recorded in a Protocol, but his Excellency could not inform me whether Count Andrassy is prepared to sign a Protocol, or whether he may not wish the object to be effected in some other form.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Doc. 690 *Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 16.)*

(No. 575. Most Confidential.)

My Lord,

Vienna, July 7, 1877.

HAVING called to-day on Count Andrassy, I had some confidential conversation with him on the subject of your Lordship's proposal to Count Beust that the understanding come to between the two Governments respecting the consequences of the war in Turkey should be recorded in a Protocol.

His Excellency said that he had just obtained the Emperor's approval to a telegram, which would be sent this evening to Count Beust, conveying the answer of the Imperial Government, stating their reasons for considering a Protocol inexpedient, and, at the same time, repeating clearly and distinctly, as far as it could be done in a telegram, the explanations which they had already given as to the course which they proposed to pursue, and the interests which they are prepared to defend with reference to the war, and the arrangements which may result from it.

His Excellency said that in his opinion Governments should be guided in their intercourse by the same principles as gentlemen in their dealings with each other, and that as Austria has stated to Russia how her interests may be affected by the war, and Russia has promised to respect them, it would now be unbecoming in her to threaten Russia with the interference of a third party to induce her to fulfil her promises, and as she has hitherto acted alone, it would be now impossible for her to enter upon any common action with England until Russia has proved false to her engagements. Besides, he said, he could not see what object Her Majesty's Government expected to obtain by the signature of a Protocol, after the explicit statements which he has already made as to what Austria could assent to with respect to future eventualities, and those interests which she is prepared to defend by war.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Doc. 691 *Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 16.)*

(No. 564. Very Confidential.)

My Lord,

Vienna, July 4, 1877.

I AM informed by the Turkish Ambassador that, in consequence of instructions from the Porte, he has asked Count Andrassy to remonstrate with the Russian Government against the unnecessary cruelty and devastation with which the war is being carried on. His Excellency stated in reply that he had obtained from the Russian Government an engagement which they now regretted, to respect the neutrality of Servia, and that he was also prepared, on the close of the war, to use the influence of Austria-Hungary with a view to the limitation of its consequences, but he said he must decline to interfere with the military measures adopted by Russia.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Doc. 692 *Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 16.)*

(No. 283. Secret.)

My Lord,

Berlin, July 9, 1877.

BEFORE leaving Berlin for Varzin, Prince Bismarck asked me to take a walk with him in his garden, and in the course of a long and desultory conversation, I gathered the following impressions :—

In the first instance, I noticed that his views on the present war have undergone some changes; he no longer thinks, as he did in May last, that peace can be made before the Russians cross the Balkan.

He thinks now that the Russians are determined to fight out their quarrel to the end, and that they will take up their winter quarters in Turkey and renew the campaign next spring if necessary.

To this he does not object, and believes that the Guaranteeing Powers will find it easier to settle the Eastern question when the belligerents are thoroughly exhausted and financially ruined.

He thinks the Powers will do well to face the question and settle it once for all, so as to relieve Europe from the danger of a renewal of war in the East for several generations to come.

Russia and Austria will, he says, take care of European Turkey, England had better secure the road to India, and if France would help herself to something in the East and leave Germany alone, who wants peace and nothing else, he would be heartily glad.

Alluding to the newspaper reports respecting an Anglo-Austrian Alliance against Russia, he observed that such a combination would be useless at present. Interference would do more harm than good. Austria had to choose between two evils to prevent the formation of a great Slave State on her frontiers, a quarrel with Russia or an increase of territory. The latter was the lesser evil of the two and the safer policy.

He thought England and Austria would do well to localize the war by a neutral attitude until it is over, when they can step in and secure their interests by mediation, negotiation, or occupation, according to circumstances.

As the belligerents now stand, it is too late, he says, to stop the war as he had hoped some weeks since, and too soon to interfere with advantage.

When prostration sets in, then Austrian troops can march into Bosnia and English ships sail up the Dardanelles to Constantinople, and facilitate the conclusion of a lasting and satisfactory settlement by their presence if necessary.

Speaking of France, Prince Bismarck said that the pending crisis filled him with apprehension. If the administration drifted into clerical and Ultramontane hands, they would probably "attack Germany before a twelvemonth was over, for the President of a thriving Republic, who was mad enough to make the *coup de tête* of the 16th May last, would be equally capable of rushing into a war of revenge, and Madame la Maréchale was as much an Ultramontane as the Empress Eugenie."

Prince Bismarck repeatedly renewed his assurances of wishing to act with England, and to support Her Majesty's Government in the final settlement of the Eastern question.

The impression left on my mind by the change his language has undergone is that Prince Bismarck, who has all along reckoned on playing a prominent part in the final settlement, now wishes to discourage the establishment of more intimate relations on the part of England with Austria, which he fears may diminish his personal influence later on, and impede the progress of Russia sooner than would suit his ambitious plans.

His language about France and his alarm at a fresh invasion are the same as they have been for the last three years.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 693 *Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received July 16.)

(No. 284. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Berlin, July 9, 1877.

WITH reference to Mr. Layard's Confidential despatch No. 644 of the 20th ultimo, inclosed in your Lordship's despatch No. 239 of the 2nd instant, respecting German mediation between Turkey and Russia, I asked Prince Bismarck whether there was any truth in the report that the Porte would not reject an offer of mediation on the part of Germany at the present juncture.

Prince Bismarck replied that Prince Reuss seemed to think so, but that his impression was a personal one and not apparently founded on any fact which could give it importance, and as his instructions were to observe the strictest neutrality, it rested with the Porte to take the initiative of asking for mediation if they really wished for it, which he, Prince Bismarck, still thought very doubtful.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 694 *Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 16.)*

(No. 285. Secret.)

My Lord,

Berlin, July 14, 1877.

SINCE writing my despatch No. 283, Secret, of the 9th instant, respecting Prince Bismarck's remarks on the newspaper reports of an Anglo-Austrian Alliance (which the Berlin papers believe to be unfounded), I have learnt on good authority that he had been made generally acquainted with the communications which had passed between London and Vienna through the Russian and Austrian Governments, but not through Count Münster.

My informant tells me that Count Schouvaloff was not unfavourable to Anglo-Austrian interference, if it could be made to lead to a more speedy termination of the war, but this opinion was not shared by his Government.

Count Andrassy, I was told, privately consulted Prince Bismarck on the subject, who urged him to encourage the overtures of England and ascertain the exact terms to which Her Majesty's Government would consent when peace negotiations commenced, but he advised him at the same time not to let the agreement interfere with the progress of the war, until it came to a natural termination by the defeat of Turkey. He thought the united action of Austria and England might be beneficially exercised in the interest of a lasting settlement.

Now this information does not quite agree with my impression of Prince Bismarck's language to me on the subject, but he probably thought it necessary to conceal from me that he knew what had passed.

I am also assured on good authority that the understanding between Count Andrassy, Prince Bismarck, and Prince Gortchakow, has become more intimate since the Russian army has crossed the Danube, and that they are now determined to insist on a "lasting solution" of the Oriental question, which I take to mean the dismemberment of the Turkish Empire in Europe.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 695

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 246. Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 16, 1877.

COUNT BEUST has this day stated that he is authorized to inform me officially that no engagement exists between Austria and Russia other than that which results from the despatches and telegrams already communicated to Her Majesty's Government.

I asked his Excellency what was meant by this phrase.

Count Beust replied that it amounted to this—that the Austrian Government have accepted certain assurances given by Russia, and consider themselves pledged to treat those assurances as sincere unless evidence should appear to the contrary. No secret understanding or engagement of any kind, his Excellency said, exists between the two Governments.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 696 *Memorandum communicated to Count Schouvaloff, July 17, 1877.*

(Secret and Confidential.)

THE Cabinet are deeply impressed with the gravity of the present crisis and the danger to the general peace which may ensue unless some understanding is arrived at. They have received with sincere satisfaction the assurance given by the Emperor of Russia that, as far as concerns Constantinople, the acquisition of that capital is excluded from His Majesty's views. But the assurance does not wholly meet the exigencies of the moment, and they have therefore instructed Lord Derby to tell the Russian Ambassador, confidentially and secretly, that they regard the occupation of Constantinople by Russian troops, even though temporary in duration and dictated by military requirements, as most inexpedient in the interest of the good relations between the two countries. They therefore express their earnest hope that this step is not

contemplated by the Russian Government. Should it unfortunately appear that the occupation is likely to take place, they hold themselves free to adopt any measure which in their judgment may be required for the protection of British interests.

The Cabinet wish it at the same time to be understood that they will gladly avail themselves of any opportunity that may offer to assist in the restoration of peace on such conditions as may be consistent with the general interests of Europe and with the honour of the Russian Government.

This communication is strictly confidential, and the Cabinet are convinced that it will be received by the Russian Government in the spirit in which it is intended—not as a menace, but as a friendly warning of danger threatening both Governments, which it is most desirable they should avoid.

Doc. 697 Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 23.)

(No. 291. Secret.)

My Lord,

Berlin, July 20, 1877.

IN my despatch No. 285, Secret, of the 14th instant, I stated that the understanding between Count Andrassy, Prince Bismarck, and Prince Gortchakow had become more intimate since the Russian army had crossed the Danube, and that they were now determined to insist on a lasting solution of the Oriental question, which I took to mean the dismemberment of the Turkish Empire in Europe.

From your Lordship's despatch No. 246, Confidential, of the 16th instant, to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Vienna, I see that Count Beust has been authorized to inform your Lordship officially that no engagement exists between Austria and Russia other than that which results from the despatches and telegrams already communicated to Her Majesty's Government, and that no secret understanding or engagement of any kind exists between the two Governments.

At first sight Count Beust's official declaration and my report would appear to be in contradiction to each other if his Excellency had not qualified his statement by explaining that the Austrian Government have accepted certain assurances given by Russia, and consider themselves pledged to treat those assurances as sincere unless evidence should appear to the contrary.

Now it is the renewal of those assurances and pledges since the Russian army has crossed the Danube which has made the understanding between Austria and Russia, to which Germany is a party, even more intimate than before. Russia promises Austria, in return for her neutrality, and by way of compensation for the establishment of Bulgarian autonomy, a considerable increase of territory in Turkey. Germany secures, by her moral support, the continued alliance of Russia against France, and Russia obtains leave to establish her influence over the Slav populations of Turkey, and to annex certain portions of Bessarabia and Armenia unmolested and unopposed by Austria and Germany.

This understanding between the Northern Powers is no longer a secret one, as Count Beust is officially authorized to declare, since it results from the despatches and telegrams already communicated to Her Majesty's Government, but it results also from this understanding and its consequences that when the Sultan is no longer Sovereign or Suzerain of Bulgaria, Roumania, Servia, Bosnia, and Herzegovina, that the dismemberment of the Turkish Empire in Europe cannot be far distant.

Sir Andrew Buchanan, in his despatch No. 573, Secret, of the 7th instant, states that the Emperor of Austria, while regretting the advantages Russia must gain, finds consolation in the hope that the arrangements made will have a permanent character, and that Austria may find them more advantageous than a mere patching-up or "replâtrage" of the relations between the Porte and its subjects.

The advantage of annexing Turkish territory to Austria is, perhaps, a doubtful one; but, according to Prince Bismarck's advice to Count Andrassy, more advantageous after all than a quarrel with Russia, unless, indeed, evidence should appear that her promises are not sincere, in which case, but not before, the support of England would become invaluable to Austria.

For these reasons the language of Count Andrassy to Her Majesty's Government must remain vague, as if inclined to make common cause with England without committing himself to any precise declaration so long as Russia is faithful to her promise to promote the interests of Austria.

The Northern Allies having failed to obtain the co-operation of Her Majesty's Government in carrying out the "efficacious measures" foreshadowed from the begin-

ning, are fully aware of the danger to their plans of an English intervention while they are themselves carrying them into effect, and therefore seek to encourage the prolongation of English neutrality by vague and general offers of future support until the war is over, when they flatter themselves they can safely invite the Guaranteeing Powers to assist in the regulation of "accomplished facts," as far, at least, as Austria and Russia will be concerned.

The Northern Powers seem almost to forget that the Turkish question cannot be settled without the consent of Her Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 698
(No. 387.)

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 28, 1877.

HER Majesty's Government authorize you to sound the Sultan on the subject of possible terms of peace.

Should His Majesty be disposed to open negotiations, you may assure him that he may rely upon the friendly offices of Her Majesty's Government, which will be exerted with a view to obtain for him the most favourable terms possible under the circumstances; but Her Majesty's Government are not disposed to take the initiative in proposing any conditions.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 699

Confidential Memorandum communicated to the Russian Ambassador, July 28, 1877.

HER Majesty's Government have received with satisfaction, and will lose no time in making public, the contradiction which Colonel Wellesley has been authorized to communicate of the cruelties alleged to have been committed in Bulgaria by Russian soldiers, or those acting in concert with them, the report of which has so much excited the public feeling in this country.

Her Majesty's Government also receive with much satisfaction the statement which His Majesty the Emperor has authorized Colonel Wellesley to make, that he is ready to treat for peace if the Sultan will make suitable propositions.

Her Majesty's Government will be ready to use their influence, in concert with the other Powers, to induce the Porte to terminate the present disastrous war by acceding to such terms of peace as shall be at once honourable to Russia and yet such as the Sultan can accept.

Her Majesty's Government look with much anxiety at the state of things in Constantinople, and the prospect of the disorder and bloodshed, and even anarchy, which may occur there as the Russian forces draw nearer to the capital. The crisis which may at any moment arrive in Constantinople may be such as Her Majesty's Government could not overlook while they had the means of mitigating its horrors. Her Majesty's Government are fully determined (unless it should be necessary for the preservation of interests which they have already stated they are bound to maintain) not to depart from the line of neutrality which they have declared their intention to observe; but they do not consider that they would be departing from this neutrality, and they think that Russia will not consider that they are so doing, if they should find themselves compelled to direct their fleet to proceed to Constantinople, and thus afford protection to the European population against internal disturbance.

It must be clearly understood that no decision in favour of such a proceeding has been taken by Her Majesty's Government, but they are anxious that, in the event of its becoming necessary, no misunderstanding should arise as to their intentions, and that the Government of Russia, with which it is their sincere desire to remain on friendly terms, should not be taken by surprise.

Doc. 700

Count Andrassy to Count Beust.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Count Beust, August 3.)

(Secret et Confidentiel.)

M. le Comte,

Vienne, le 26 Juillet, 1877.

EN me référant à votre dépêche télégraphique du 14 courant, et pour prévenir tout malentendu au sujet de la question de la délimitation future de la Bulgarie, je tiens à rappeler à votre Excellence que nous maintenons l'opinion que nous avons toujours émise. C'est-à-dire, nous continuons à considérer comme inadmissibles l'établissement d'un grand Etat Slave au détriment des populations non-Slaves, notamment des populations Grecques et Albanaïses, et le règlement des conséquences de la guerre en dehors du concours des Puissances. Nous avons déjà agi et nous ne cesserons pas d'insister dans ce but. Mais d'autre part nous n'avons jamais eu en vue de considérer, et nous ne considérons pas *à priori*, en ce qui nous concerne, toute extension, quelle qu'elle soit, de la Bulgarie au delà des Balkans comme un *casus belli*.

C'est surtout pour cette raison que nous avons inséré dans notre dépêche du 29 Mai les clauses *sub* points 2 et 7 qui se retrouvent dans notre déclaration d'aujourd'hui.

D'abord une définition précise des Balkans est de toute impossibilité, vu leur étendue et leur configuration spéciale. Ensuite l'extension projetée ne saurait être que restreinte, attendu qu'elle ne pourrait pas s'effectuer sans notre assentiment ni celui de l'Angleterre.

Nous sommes loin de méconnaître les justes appréhensions qu'inspire aux hommes d'Etat de l'Angleterre la perspective d'une Bulgarie s'étendant jusqu'aux portes d'Adrianople, ce qui amènerait fatalement dans un temps plus ou moins rapproché l'acquisition de la capitale de l'Empire Ottoman. Seulement il nous semble que le point principal ne réside pas dans l'adjonction de quelques districts du versant méridional des Balkans à la nouvelle province Bulgare. La Russie devra-t-elle évacuer la Bulgarie et n'y exercer aucune protection spéciale? oui ou non? C'est là l'essentiel. Avec une occupation Russe permanente en Bulgarie, même la chaîne entière et intacte des montagnes n'aurait aucune valeur stratégique pour la Turquie et ne lui offrirait pas une ligne de défense effective. Par contre, si cette province est livrée à elle-même, si elle n'est occupée que par une milice nationale, et pourvu que la Roumanie soit soustraite à la dépendance de la Russie, le danger pour Constantinople nous paraît bien moindre. Quand les vœux des Bulgares auront été satisfaits, surtout si la frontière de leur contrée ne leur aura pas été mesurée avec trop de parcimonie, il est à prévoir que les aspirations vers l'indépendance prendront le dessus. L'ingratitude des peuples compte de nombreux exemples dans l'histoire.

Nous concluons de l'exposé qui précède que la démarcation des Balkans ne devrait pas être, à notre avis, le pivot de notre conduite politique, tandis qu'il importe surtout qu'à la fin de la guerre la Bulgarie soit évacuée aussitôt que faire se pourra par les armées Russes, qu'il n'y soit pas créé un grand état Slave, et que la Roumanie et la Bulgarie restent complètement indépendantes de la Russie.

Dans les circonstances présentes ce programme nous paraît la seule sauvegarde pratique et possible de nos intérêts et de ceux de l'Angleterre, engagés au même titre dans la question spéciale qui fait l'objet de cette dépêche.

Votre Excellence est autorisée à en donner lecture au Principal Secrétaire de Sa Majesté la Reine de la Grande Bretagne.

Recevez, &c.
(Signé) ANDRASSY.

Doc. 701

Aarifi Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, August 7.)

(Télégraphique.)

Constantinople, le 5 Août, 1877.

IL nous revient qu'une alliance entre l'Angleterre et l'Autriche devient de plus en plus probable. Veuillez me télégraphier vos dernières informations à ce sujet.

Doc. 702

*Observations on Count Andrassy's Despatch of
July 26, containing Austrian Declaration.*

I DO not quite understand what it is proposed should be done about this exchange of Declarations.

Is the British Government expected simply to endorse Count Andrassy's despatch to Count Beust, or is it intended that they should make a Declaration of their own containing the points with regard to Egypt, &c., which *they* consider inadmissible.

If we are expected to endorse the Austrian despatch, it would be as well to know precisely what it means.

Articles 1 and 2, with regard to the exclusive protectorate, or the establishment of the political organization of the Balkans, at the mandate ("octroyée") of one Power, are of political utility to Austria, who possibly counts on establishing Austrian influence, but of minor importance to us.

Article 3 would permit Russia to acquire territory on the left bank of the Danube, *i.e.*, to deprive Moldavia of the slice of Bessarabia given to it by the Treaty of Paris.

Article 4 provides against the incorporation of Roumania by Russia, or a Russian Protectorate of Roumania; but says nothing about *Servia*, where the Russian influence is much stronger, as it is a Slav State.

Article 5. What is meant by the establishment of a *secondo-geniture*? The word may have some technical meaning which may be guessed at, but we should be told in plain language what it means.

6. The taking possession of Constantinople. Does this include also the occupation of the Gallipoli Peninsula? Might Russia station herself there? or acquire a Mediterranean port, *e.g.*, Salonica or Enos, as a material guarantee?

7. What is meant by the political autonomy "des provinces actuelles?" Which are they? Is the vilayet of Adrianople to be one of them? If so, what is to be the boundary? Is this autonomous Province to extend to the sea in any direction?

I do not wish to be hypercritical, and of course in such matters a good deal must be left vague; but if Her Majesty's Government are to engage themselves to certain points at the hazard of war, we ought to know pretty distinctly what they mean.

As Count Andrassy says he has reason to believe that the Russian Government agree to his points (except as to the Straits, on which he has not communicated with them), we may conclude that these seven points form the Agreement entered into between Russia and Austria for which the foundation was laid by the alliance of the three Emperors.

It is doubtful whether he has told us the whole of it, as there must have been something else about the acquisition of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria in certain contingencies. What contingencies, we have yet to learn.

It seems to me, on the whole, that what Austria is aiming at is to allow Russia to overrun Turkey and completely break up the Ottoman Power (in Asia as well as Europe), on the chance of being able to assert Austrian influence at a Peace Congress, and afterwards gain the allegiance of the newly-constituted autonomous States.

Count Andrassy wants us to pledge ourselves to assist in the Congress part of the plan, and to be able to tell the Russians that she has English support.

In return for this support we should have Austrian support against a permanent occupation of Constantinople, and against any settlement of the Straits question except in Congress.

Perhaps the best way, as they have told us what they cannot tolerate, would be for us to tell them what we could not tolerate. But what is to be said? Merely what we have already said to Russia, or should anything more be said—*e. g.*, that Russia should not be permitted to acquire by protectorate or otherwise any port in the Mediterranean or any command over the Straits by occupation of the Gallipoli Peninsula, or take possession of the Turkish fleet?

There are three or four ways of answering Count Beust:—

1. Request more explicit information on the points, such as *secundo-geniture*, left ambiguous or unintelligible in the Declaration.

2. Give a general adhesion to the Declaration.

3. Agree generally in the Declaration and add any special points affecting British interests.

4. Make a counter-Declaration confined to points affecting British interests.

(Signed) TENTERDEN.

July 31, 1877.

Doc. 703

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 284. Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 14, 1877.

HER Majesty's Government have had under their consideration the despatch addressed by Count Andrassy to the Austrian Ambassador at this Court on the 26th ultimo, of which his Excellency was authorized to leave a copy in my hands. The purport of that despatch is to define those possible consequences of the present war which the Governments of Great Britain and of Austria-Hungary would consider to be inadmissible, and would be prepared, if necessary, jointly to resist.

The following are the points which the Government of Austria-Hungary consider to be incompatible with the interests of that Empire:—

1. The exclusive protectorate of any one Power over the Christian populations of the Balkan Peninsula.

2. The definitive settlement of the results of the war without the concurrence of the Guaranteeing Powers, or the concession of any political organization to the Balkan Peninsula through the agency of a single Power.

3. Any territorial acquisition by Russia on the right bank of the Danube.

4. The incorporation of Roumania by Russia, or the establishment of a Russian Protectorate over that Principality.

5. The establishment of a Russian or Austro-Hungarian *secundo-geniture* in the countries above-mentioned.

6. The possession ("prise de possession") of Constantinople by Russia.

7. The establishment of a great Slav State, to the detriment of the non-Slavonic populations of the Balkan Peninsula. (In any case the maximum of a new organization should not exceed the limits of a political autonomy of the present provinces, with a native Chief at their head.)

To these points the Austrian Government are ready to add the reservation made by that of England regarding the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus. That is to say, they consider that the ancient rule as to the closing of these Straits should be maintained, and that if there should be occasion to make in it any modification of detail, such modification could only be effected by means of a general agreement among the Guaranteeing Powers.

The Cabinet of Vienna are of opinion that the best method of guaranteeing the interests above defined would consist in parallel but independent action by each of the two Powers on its own part, and without reference to the other, as necessity may arise. They state that, with the exception of the question of the Straits, as to which they have had no special communication with the Russian Government, they have reason to believe that the latter will respect their interests as stated above. If, however, under the pressure of events, or of some unforeseen compulsion, the Cabinet of St. Petersburg should be unable to fulfil its promises, the Austrian Government would be ready to join with that of Her Majesty in considering the further measures which might be necessary for the defence and material preservation of such of our reciprocal interests as might be menaced.

Such is the substance of the declaration which Count Beust has been authorized to make to me.

Her Majesty's Government, on the other hand, at the commencement of the war, laid down, in a note which I addressed to Count Schouvaloff on the 6th of May last, the following points as those, among others, which most immediately affected British interests.

They stated that any attempt to blockade or otherwise to interfere with the Suez Canal or its approaches would be inconsistent with the maintenance by them of an

attitude of passive neutrality; that an attack on Egypt, or its occupation, even temporary, for purposes of war, could not be regarded by them with unconcern; that they were not prepared to witness with indifference the passing of Constantinople into other hands than those of its present possessors; and that there would be, in their judgment, serious objections to the alteration in any material particular of the existing arrangements regulating the navigation of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles.

In reply to this communication Her Majesty's Government have received from that of Russia assurances in regard to Egypt and the Suez Canal which appear to them entirely satisfactory.

As regards Constantinople, Prince Gortchakow has stated that the acquisition of that capital is excluded from the views of the Emperor, and has recognized that its future is a question of common interest, which cannot be settled otherwise than by a general understanding, adding at the same time, however, that the Imperial Cabinet are unable to prejudge the course or issue of the war. And with regard to the Straits, he has confined himself to admitting that the question is one which should be settled by a common agreement on equitable and efficiently guaranteed bases.

Her Majesty's Government have been glad to find that the Cabinet of Austria are agreed with them as to the necessity of preventing the possession of Constantinople by Russia, and as to the expediency of maintaining the present arrangements for the closing of the Straits of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus to the ships of war of foreign Powers. With regard to the reservation made in Count Andrassy's despatch respecting the possible introduction of some modification of detail into these latter provisions with the concurrence of the Guaranteeing Powers, Her Majesty's Government, without rejecting absolutely the idea of all modification whatsoever, are still of opinion that such a change would be undesirable, and that in any case it would be necessary to guard carefully against proposals calculated to leave Constantinople at the mercy of a Russian fleet, or to allow unrestricted egress to the Russian naval forces for aggressive purposes from the Black Sea into the Mediterranean. For the same reason Her Majesty's Government would feel strong objections, which they doubt not would be shared by the Mediterranean Powers, to the provisional or permanent acquisition by Russia of a port on the Mediterranean coast.

The other points mentioned in Count Andrassy's despatch, though some of them do not affect British interests so immediately as those which I have just mentioned, are yet objectionable either in themselves or in their ulterior consequences, and Her Majesty's Government are prepared to join with that of Austria in opposing them, if occasion should arise.

The mode of proceeding proposed by Count Andrassy for effecting the object in view is not, perhaps, calculated to secure the same attention to the representations of the two Powers as might be effected by a more openly concerted action in the first instance. But Her Majesty's Government understand and appreciate the objections raised by Count Andrassy to the latter course, and are prepared to pursue that which the Austrian Government considers best fitted to their position.

Your Excellency is authorized to leave a copy of this despatch with Count Andrassy on the same conditions as the communication made by Count Beust to me.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 704

Memorandum for Colonel Wellesley.

(Confidential.)

HER Majesty's Government have considered the communication brought by Colonel Wellesley from the Emperor of Russia with all the attention which its importance deserves.

They have received with satisfaction the statement made by His Majesty as to the object of the war in which he is engaged, his disclaimer of any extensive ideas of annexation, and his readiness to enter into negotiations for peace. They are grateful for the assurance which he has given of his intention to respect the interests of England.

It is the earnest desire of Her Majesty's Government to contribute to the re-establishment of peace, and in the meanwhile they have no intention of departing from that attitude of strict, though conditional, neutrality which they have hitherto observed. They would gladly use whatever influence they possess at Constantinople to encourage a pacific disposition on the part of the Sultan and his advisers. They

cannot, however, admit that, as appears to be supposed by the Emperor, "the present policy of England tends to encourage the Turks and consequently to prolong the war." They fear that the influence which they are enabled to exercise on the counsels of the Porte is far less than His Imperial Majesty seems disposed to ascribe to them. So long as the Porte thought fit to expect the military support of England it was natural that English advice should be sought with eagerness and received with deference. But under the contrary circumstances that now prevail at Constantinople, the position of the English Government in Turkish opinion is no longer that of protectors who must be conciliated at any cost, but of neutrals, from whom neither assistance nor hostility is to be anticipated. Further, it does not appear to Her Majesty's Government that the present juncture is one which offers a favourable opening for the commencement of negotiations. The military events which have occurred since the date of the communication made by the Emperor to Colonel Wellesley will have necessarily indisposed the Turkish Government to entertain any propositions of peace except on conditions such as it is unlikely that the Russian Government would accept.

Her Majesty's Government, however, will bear in mind the communication with which they have been honoured, and the Emperor may rest assured that they will lose no opportunity which appears to them suitable to assist in the restoration of peace.

August 14, 1877.

Doc. 705

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received August 15.)

(No. 887. Secret.)

My Lord,

Therapia, August 2, 1877.

I HAVE had means of ascertaining secretly whether the Sultan would be disposed to consider overtures for bringing the war with Russia to an end. I may, I think, state with some confidence that His Majesty could not, under present circumstances, either propose or listen to any conditions of peace. Although His Majesty, I have every reason to believe, is personally most desirous and anxious to save his Empire from the horrors of war, his Ministers and others who have influence on the country are now so much encouraged by the recent successes obtained by the Turkish armies over the Russians at Plevna and Eski-Zaghra and in Asia, and by the assurances given by Mehemet Ali Pasha that he will be able, within a few days, to commence offensive operations with every prospect of a favourable result, that they feel confident that the enemy will be ultimately repulsed and driven out of Bulgaria and Roumelia, as he has been out of Armenia. The manner, too, in which the Russians are stated to be carrying on the war has exasperated the Mussulmans, and has indisposed them to entertain any proposals for peace which Russia is likely to make or to accept.

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Doc. 706

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 328. Most Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 15, 1877.

THE Austrian Ambassador having returned to England, requested an interview, in order to make me acquainted with the views of Count Andrassy, with whom he told me that he had had two long conversations before leaving Vienna.

Count Beust accordingly came down at my invitation to Knowsley on the 10th instant, and spoke to me at length on the policy of the Austrian Government with regard to affairs in Turkey.

He said that Count Andrassy was opposed to any attempt at mediation between Russia and Turkey, even should one of the parties ask for it. If the request came from both belligerents the case might be different, but that was not a probable contingency. Count Beust explained that Count Andrassy's resolution on this point was founded on the following considerations:—

A year ago, when General Sumarokoff had been sent to Vienna with a proposal from the Emperor Alexander that Russia should occupy Bulgaria, and that Austria should at the same time occupy Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Emperor of Austria had said in reply to that proposal "We cannot prevent you from going to war if you are determined to do so, but we warn you that, having once invaded Bulgaria with the

professed intention of emancipating the Christian population, it will not be easy for you to retire, and it will be necessary for Austria to insist on your retiring, even if we have to resort to force."

Having thus acted loyally to Russia, continued Count Beust, and given her fair warning of the possible consequence of the course on which she has entered, it is not the business of the Austrian Government to afford the Emperor Alexander an opportunity of saying that he has been again prevented from fulfilling the "historical mission" of Russia in the East by the intervention of a foreign Power. Russia must and will show that she is unable, with full liberty of action, to settle the Eastern Question in her own way and for the exclusive benefit of the Slav races.

I asked his Excellency how Count Andrassy's views would be affected, supposing that in a second campaign or in the winter the Turkish defence should collapse, or that Russia obtained a decisive success. In that case the reason alleged for maintaining a policy of inaction would be inappropriate.

Count Beust was unable to reply to my inquiry, but said he would take the question *ad referendum*. He seemed to think that the answer would be that interference would be contrary to the understanding which existed between Austria and Russia. His Excellency appeared to agree with me when I said that to give Russia an excuse for withdrawing from the contest seemed to me desirable rather than otherwise. We had no wish, I said, to humiliate Russia; we only desired that the war should be brought to a speedy conclusion.

In answer to a further question, Count Beust said that Count Andrassy and Prince Bismarck were closely united and acting in common. Prince Bismarck, he observed, was entirely in favour of the Russian cause and would do what he could to help the Emperor Alexander. I commented on the singularity of the situation—Austria and Germany adopting an identical policy from apparently opposite motives.

His Excellency said that Count Andrassy had heard some rumours of a direct understanding between Russia and Turkey, but that he did not think anything of the kind was to be apprehended.

In this I agreed. I said that the same reports had reached me, but that I thought an arrangement of this nature, though possible at the commencement of the difference, was now out of the question.

Count Beust went on to say that if the Turkish forces continued to have the advantage, the policy of Austria would be directed to the maintenance of the same European control over the Porte as had been established by the Treaty of Paris. I pointed out that there might be some difficulty in doing this under such circumstances, that the Porte might not unnaturally object to the continuance of a control by the European Powers when the protection which, if not explicitly, was at least virtually the condition on which such control had been conceded had been withheld. This part of our conversation was, however, entirely unofficial, and had merely the character of a hypothetical discussion.

His Excellency proceeded to explain why the Austrian Government had abstained from any interference to prevent Serbia from resuming hostilities against Turkey. He said, in the first place, that the Austrian Government were convinced that Serbia would hold back as long as the Russians were at a disadvantage, and would only come forward, if at all, when the Russian arms were successful, and when, in fact, her assistance would be practically useless. But further, the position of Austria was such that she could not confine herself to verbal remonstrances. The British Government were differently situated: they could not send a fleet to Belgrade, and if their advice was unheeded they might, without loss of dignity, leave matters to take their course. But if Austria warned, and her warning was neglected, she would have no alternative but to follow up the warning by action; and military action against Serbia would be inconvenient, and would involve the risk of war with Russia.

Count Beust said that Austria was prepared in any case to insist on the withdrawal of the Russian forces from Bulgaria immediately on the conclusion of peace.

I remarked that the withdrawal of the troops might be a matter of little concern if it were preceded by the razing of the fortresses, and other measures calculated to make the country dependent for the future on Russia rather than Turkey.

Count Beust did not, however, seem to think that there was much danger of the Russians being able to effect this.

His Excellency had met Prince Bismarck at Gastein. He described the German Chancellor as speaking of England with the greatest sympathy, and asserting his anxiety to act with Her Majesty's Government. He had explained his policy as regards the present question very briefly by saying that Germany had no frontier

conterminous with Turkey, but a very long one with Russia, and that he was, therefore, chiefly anxious to keep on good terms with the latter Power. Count Beust said that he seemed very apprehensive of a European coalition against Germany. I said I had heard the same before, and I asked if his Excellency could explain the reason. Count Beust seemed unable to suggest any cause other than a consciousness that Germany had not come by her late acquisitions in a manner to conciliate the friendship or goodwill of her neighbours. He said that Prince Bismarck had entertained an idea of sending troops into Poland, in case any disturbance broke out there, thinking that a Polish rising formed part of the programme of the great Catholic movement, which he considered hostile to Germany. From this purpose Count Andrassy had succeeded in dissuading him.

In conclusion, Count Beust made some remarks as to the policy of the Italian Government. He said that the Cabinet of Vienna were very distrustful of the intentions of Italy, that they believed her to be on the watch to take advantage of any opportunity for acquisitions at the expense of Austria.

I could not say that I thought these suspicions wholly unreasonable, but I told his Excellency the purport of what had been said to me by M. Crispi at a recent interview, as recorded in my despatch to Sir A. Paget, No. 328, Confidential, of the 5th instant, of which you have received a copy.

Count Beust seemed confident that, if any contest took place between the two countries, Austria would have no difficulty in crushing her opponent. He said that in that case no cession of territory would be demanded of Italy. Austria would follow the example of Germany in the recent war with France in demanding a large pecuniary indemnity.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 707

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, October 15, 1877, 3.40 P.M.

IS there any objection to Sir A. Buchanan mentioning to Count Andrassy the language held to you and to the Porte by Count Zichy as to mediation, and asking how far it is authorised?

Doc. 708

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 28.)

(No. 457. Secret.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, October 27, 1877.

COUNT ZICHY spoke to me again to-day about mediation. I told him that I was authorized to second the initiative that he might take in the matter, should the Austrian Government think fit to prosecute it. He asked me whether he might telegraph this to Vienna. I said that I saw no objection to his doing so, as I had said the same to him before and to the Grand Vizier.

Grand Vizier observed to me yesterday that there were persons who were endeavouring to induce him to come to a separate understanding with Russia; but he would not tell me who they were. He only said that he had not received the advice from Germany.

As regards the proposed letter referred to in my secret telegram of the 21st instant, the matter is now before the Sultan and Grand Vizier, and I shall probably be able to tell you more on the subject in a day or two. I am endeavouring to persuade them that the first measure to be taken is to put an end to Bulgarian executions, and to issue a proclamation granting a general amnesty and promising protection and good treatment with the liberties guaranteed by the Constitution to those who have been faithful and who may return to their allegiance.

Doc. 709

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 31.)

(No. 460. Secret.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, October 30, 1877.

I HAD a long interview this morning with the Sultan at his request. His Majesty said that he would not appeal to the Emperor of Russia unless the position of affairs was desperate, and that the safety of his Empire rendered it imperative upon him to do so.

He would rather have recourse to the mediation of Europe, to which he seems disposed to recur. As regards the terms of peace, he said that Turkey went to war to maintain her integrity and independence, and that any peace must have them for its basis, otherwise his people were determined to continue the struggle to the last. He seemed disposed to issue a Proclamation to the Bulgarians, and he gave me the most positive and distinct assurances as to his intention of giving a general amnesty and guarantees for the future good government of his Christian subjects as soon as the war was at an end.

He asked me to come to him again in a day or two, when he would be able to give me a more definite opinion upon the steps that he would be prepared to take to obtain peace.

If you should think it desirable that I should give any advice, will you inform me without delay?

Doc. 710 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 31.)

(No. 806. Secret.)

My Lord,

Vienna, October 20, 1877.

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram of this date, marked Secret, I have the honour to state that I have never spoken to any one here of Count Zichy's wish to offer the mediation of Austria to the Porte, and that when any of my colleagues have spoken to me of the reports in circulation as to the probability of negotiations for peace, I have always declared them to be without foundation.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Doc. 711

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 661. Secret.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 31, 1877.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 1207, Secret, of the 15th instant, in which you report in detail the communications which have passed between yourself, Count Zichy, and the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, on the subject of mediation with a view to bring the present war to an end, and, in reply, I have to refer your Excellency to my despatch No. 604, Secret, of the 17th instant, in which I communicated to you the views of Her Majesty's Government upon this subject.

I have, moreover, to state to you that Her Majesty's Government approve your judicious language and treatment of this delicate matter as now further reported in your above-mentioned despatch.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 712 Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 1.)

(No. 462. Secret.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, October 31, 1877.

I HAVE received information from a trustworthy, though not official, source, that there is some idea of sending to Russian head-quarters a Turkish officer on the pretence of asking for an armistice, but with the real object of sounding the Emperor of Russia as to treating for peace directly with the Sultan. German Ambassador and Italian Minister have been asked, I am told, if their Governments would be disposed to offer mediation, but have answered that they did not see on what basis mediation could be proposed.

Grand Vizier and Minister for Foreign Affairs have asked me to meet them to-morrow, and I hope then to learn more as to what is going on.

Doc. 713

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 666. Secret.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 1, 1877.

YOUR telegram No. 457, Secret, of the 27th ultimo, has been received, and I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government approve your having urged upon the

Sultan and Grand Vizier the importance, in view of any overtures for peace, of putting an end to the executions of Bulgarians, and of granting a general amnesty to all who may return to their allegiance.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 714 Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 2.)

(No. 1242. Secret.)

My Lord,

Therapia, October 19, 1877.

I HAD an opportunity yesterday, after presenting Admiral Hornby to the Sultan, to have some private and very confidential conversation with His Majesty. The only other person present was Said Pasha.

His Majesty seemed somewhat depressed, but by no means disheartened, by the news of the defeat of Mukhtar Pasha. He spoke of it with his usual good sense. Mukhtar, His Majesty observed, was a spoilt General. He had been so successful, and had received so much praise for his victories, that his head had been somewhat turned, and he fancied that he had only to attack the Russians to defeat them. He had, consequently, left his strong position, which he could have held against the enemy, and had taken the offensive. His Majesty said that Mukhtar Pasha had still 30,000 men for the defence of Kars, and had occupied the strong passes in the Soghanlee Dagh with 10,000 men. His Majesty expressed his hopes that the state of affairs was not so bad as it had been at first represented to him, and added that every effort was being made to send additional troops to Erzeroum, and that by his orders seventeen battalions were to be embarked for Trebizonde on that very day.

The Sultan said that he had been very anxious to see me in consequence of the overtures which had been made by the Austrian Ambassador to the Minister for Foreign Affairs as to an offer of mediation on the part of Austria. Server Pasha had communicated to him what had passed with Count Zichy, and had informed him that I had been made fully acquainted with it.

Server Pasha had advised that no step should be taken in the matter without previous consultation with Her Majesty's Government. Such also was his own view, and he was desirous of asking my opinion on the subject.

I replied that I had informed Her Majesty's Government of the language held by Count Zichy to Server Pasha and myself. They had decided, as I had already told His Majesty, not to take the first step in proposing mediation; but I was authorized to state that they would readily second any efforts that Austria might make to put an end to the war, as they thought that no opportunity should be lost which might afford an opening for peace. I then asked His Majesty whether he was prepared to accept an offer of mediation from Austria or any other Power.

His Majesty answered that he had nothing more at heart than to bring to an end a war which was bringing such incalculable misery upon his subjects, Mussulmans as well as Christians. But he could not be expected to agree to terms which were inconsistent with his dignity, and with the integrity and independence of his Empire, for the maintenance of which he had been forced into war. His Majesty then went into a long statement of his views as to the Treaty of Paris, and as to the basis which it might afford for a peace conducive to the interests of his country and of Europe. I need not endeavour to repeat to your Lordship His Majesty's words, as they agree in all essential points with the language of Server Pasha, which I have reported to your Lordship in other despatches, but I am bound to say that I was surprised at the remarkable ability and clearness with which he placed his views before me and enforced his arguments. Their drift was, that the Treaty of Paris had not effected its object of preventing Russian aggression on Turkey, and that such being the case the Powers who signed it ought to amend it, so as to make it really effective for that purpose. His Majesty did not enter into any details as to what in his opinion those amendments should be; but he hinted at those mentioned to me by Server Pasha, as reported to your Lordship in my secret despatch No. 1207 of the 15th instant.

I ventured to observe to His Majesty that, whilst the Treaty of Paris was, no doubt, entered into with the object he had described, there was an implied reciprocal engagement on the part of Turkey to govern her Christian subjects, in whom the Christian Powers could not but feel a deep interest, with justice, and to place them on a perfect equality with the Mohammedans. Unfortunately that engagement had not been fulfilled to the extent that those Powers had reason to expect.

His Majesty with perfect frankness admitted the truth of what I had said. He assured me that it was his earnest desire and intention to satisfy Europe on that point. He would afford proof of it when he could act freely, and was no longer hampered by the war. His Majesty repeated an observation that he had made to me on a previous occasion—that it was extremely difficult for a Sovereign who had just ascended the throne, and who had been previously kept in ignorance of public affairs, to separate the good men from the bad. He had not yet, he said, sufficient knowledge and experience to select the best men for his Ministers. He had very probably made on some occasions a bad choice. He could, however, give me the most positive assurances that he was not under the influence of any irresponsible persons, and that he endeavoured to form his own opinions and to act upon them for the best. He knew that there was a great deal said about “the influence of the palace,” by which was meant, he presumed, some influence which was secret and opposed to the true interests of his people. When anything went wrong it was immediately attributed to “the palace.” This idea was entirely unfounded. Ministers, His Majesty observed, took credit for all the good that was done, and sought to shift upon his shoulders all the bad. Midhat Pasha, for instance, boasted that he was the sole author of the Constitution. This was not the case. He had himself suggested the Constitution and the Parliament. They were his own work. “Do you think,” asked His Majesty, “that I wish to destroy what I have myself made?”

“As I thus consider myself,” His Majesty went on to say, “the author of the Constitution and of the Parliament, I am bound in honour to maintain and respect them. I will do so, and this is the best guarantee I can give to Europe that my subjects shall be well and justly governed, without distinction of race or creed,”

I replied to His Majesty that I was fully convinced of his good intentions, but that I thought that if some measures were taken at once to prove their sincerity, a favourable impression might be made on public opinion in Europe, which could not be but of great advantage to his interests.

His Majesty asked me to what measures I alluded. He would be very glad, he said, to have any advice that I would give him. I answered that the subject was a very wide one, and that, as I had already occupied so much of his time, I would, if His Majesty permitted me, enter upon it on some other occasion. His Majesty replied that I could see him on any day that I might wish, and he begged me to come to him in the following week, as he was desirous to talk these matters over very fully with me.

On my leaving His Majesty, he was good enough to say that he had heard with great pleasure and satisfaction from Musurus Pasha that the Queen had been pleased to confirm me as Her Ambassador to him, adding that he looked upon me as a friend in whom he could place complete trust and confidence.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Doc. 715 Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 2.)

(No. 466. Secret.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, November 1, 1877.

I HAD a long interview to-day with Grand Vizier and Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs. They assured me most distinctly that no appeal of any kind will be made to Russia, or any direct understanding come to with her without previous consultation with England, and until all hope of mediation or intervention on her part or on that of the other European Powers is gone. They are going to communicate to me, for submission to Her Majesty's Government, the terms of peace which they are ready to accept. No application, they state, has been made either to Italy or Germany for mediation. The matter has been only casually mentioned in conversation, when the German Ambassador observed that he was quite ignorant of the conditions upon which Russia would consent to peace.

Grand Vizier informs me that Mukhtar Pasha is confident of being able to hold his positions in front of Erzeroum, and that the reinforcements sent to him will reach him in a day or two. He admits that Plevna is invested, but hopes that communications with it will be re-established. He does not consider the position of affairs desperate, says the country can carry on the struggle, and depends on the weather to impede operations of the Russians. The quantity of provisions in Plevna is doubtful, but Grand Vizier thinks that it is sufficient for at least two months.

Doc. 716 *Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received November 6.)

(No. 472. Secret.)

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, November 5, 1877, 9:45 P.M.

I HAVE seen Grand Vizier and Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs again to-day. They say the Sultan would be willing to make peace on following terms:—

1. The Treaty of Paris to be accepted as a basis.

2. All the concessions made at the Conference, and reforms referred to in the London Protocol, to be adhered to by the Porte.

3. Servia to be left as before the war, but with a modification of the XXIXth Article of the Treaty of Paris, which renders it necessary for the Porte to come to a previous understanding with the Signatory Powers before having recourse to armed intervention.

4. The *status quo ante* as regards Montenegro. The Porte might agree to a rectification of frontiers, but as at present advised would not consent to surrender *Nichsich*.

5. The Bessarabian territory ceded by Russia to be restored, but means to be found to prevent Russian and Turkish frontiers being conterminous.

6. Sultan would be disposed to surrender suzerainty over Roumania to Austria-Hungary, the surrendered territory to be annexed to Hungary. Austria, on the other hand, to consent to unrestricted use by Turkey of the port of Klek. In addition to these conditions, the Sultan might undertake to carry out the proposed reforms within ten years, and to repeat publicly and solemnly his determination to abide by the Constitution. The Grand Vizier further intimated that Batoum might be declared a free port, and be connected by a branch line with the Russian railway at Poti, which would give Russia all the commercial advantages that Russia can require. His Highness undertakes, if the Cretans will send a joint Commission of Mussulmans and Christians to Constantinople, to make such modifications in the organization of the law as will satisfy them. His Highness is not unfavourable to a Mixed Commission being appointed to inquire into and report upon the reforms needed in Bulgaria, Bosnia, and Herzegovina, provided that the foreign members on it shall be named by the Porte. His Highness wishes it to be understood that these conditions are not yet laid formally or officially before Her Majesty's Government. If Her Majesty's Government consider them sufficient and satisfactory, and would advise their adoption by Russia, they would be communicated officially after receiving the approval of the Council of Ministers, which has not yet been consulted, as the matter is altogether secret. The draft of a Proclamation to the Bulgarians is being prepared, and Grand Vizier assures me that there will be no more executions except in exceptional cases.

Doc. 717

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 404.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, November 17, 1877.

THE Russian Ambassador called upon me this afternoon, and in the course of conversation remarked to me that there was one passage in Lord Beaconsfield's speech at the Guildhall which, as Russian Ambassador, he felt bound to notice, though he had no instructions to do so, lest an argument should hereafter be drawn from his having allowed it to pass without comment.

The passage to which he referred was thus reported in one of the London daily journals:

"I cannot forget that the Emperor of Russia, with a magnanimity characteristic of his truly elevated character, announced, on the eve of commencing this war, that his only object was to secure the safety and happiness of the Christian subjects of the Porte, and he pledged his imperial word of honour, and not upon one occasion only, that he sought no increase of territory."

Count Schouvaloff said that he was not aware that the Emperor had, since the outbreak of the war, made any declaration which could preclude territorial cessions forming a portion of the eventual terms of peace.

I said in reply that, without denying his statement, I thought he would admit that any declarations such as those in question would not be affected by the circumstance that they were made either before or after the outbreak of hostilities, and that the language of the Emperor Alexander had throughout been to the effect that he was

not waging a war of conquest, but that the conflict had been begun and was carried on by Russia for other objects.

To this remark Count Schouvaloff took no objection.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 718 Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 30.)

(No. 1368. Very Confidential.)

My Lord,

Therapia, November 19, 1877.

SERVER PASHA observed to me to-day, when I was calling upon him, that he was surprised and indignant at the language used by Count Andrassy to the Turkish Ambassador at Pesth. He could have no more reliance upon Austria, his Excellency said, nor confidence in any assurances that Count Andrassy might give. After Count Zichy had distinctly stated that Russia would not be allowed to send her armies through Servia, and that Servia would not be permitted to join her forces with those of Russia in the present war, Count Andrassy had informed Epael Bey, who had represented the present threatening attitude of Servia to him, that he should not interfere in any way with her proceedings, as all he had to consider was the interests of Austria-Hungary, which would not be affected by them.

I asked his Excellency whether he was quite sure that Count Zichy had given any promise that the Servians would not be allowed by Austria to attack Turkey; my impression was, I said, that whilst the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador had referred to a promise given by the Emperor of Russia that his troops should not pass through Servia during the present war, a promise which the Emperor of Austria expressed his belief would be adhered to, he had stated, at the same time, that if the Servians entered Turkey Austria would not interfere. I reminded his Excellency that he had himself mentioned to me that when he had asked Count Zichy what Turkey should do in such case, he had replied that if the Porte chose to send 20,000 irregulars into the Principality no one would have a right to interfere.

Server Pasha maintained that I had misunderstood him. Three things were referred to, he said, by Count Zichy:—

1. The passage of Russian troops through Servia, to which the Emperor of Russia had pledged himself not to have recourse;

2. The union of the Servian troops with those of Russia in making war upon Turkey, which Austria would not permit; and

3. The invasion of Bosnia by the Servians, with which Austria would not interfere, and which Turkey might resist by employing her irregular troops.

Notwithstanding this explanation, I cannot but believe, from the language held to me by Count Zichy, that Server Pasha is mistaken, and that no distinct promise was given by Count Andrassy that in the event of the Servians threatening to attack Turkey, Austria would interfere to prevent them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Doc. 719 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 1.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Most Confidential.)

Buda-Pesth, December 1, 1877, 10 P.M.

THE Foreign Minister has spoken to me of a telegram from Count Beust inquiring, on the part of Her Majesty's Government, what Austria would do in the event of an advance of Russian army on Constantinople. He has replied that he is surprised Count Beust should not have answered this question without asking for instructions, as his declarations on the subject are sufficiently explicit, and he has shown no inclination to withdraw them. He said he had stated his objections to a Russian army occupying Constantinople, though he did not intend to interfere with the operations of the war; but he will insist, in the event of an occupation of Constantinople by the Russian army, on its not remaining there, and as he thinks that such a demand from a Government who can support it by 1,000,000 soldiers would be complied with, he feels confident that Russia will not expose herself to the risk of its being addressed to her.

Doc. 720 *Memorandum communicated by Count Beust, December 3, 1877.*

(Confidential.)

YOUR Excellency must be aware that a most definite answer is contained in our previous communications.

My despatch of the 22nd June exposes the reasons why we declined, and still decline, to demand beforehand a promise from Russia not to march on Constantinople. My telegraphic despatches Nos. 80 and 90, say distinctly that we wish to see avoided even a temporary Russian occupation of Constantinople; that we would not look on in silence at a more protracted occupation; but that we should regard a permanent "prise de possession" as *casus belli*, and act in consequence, and that we would loyally give notice of the above to Russia at the moment when a real danger of the occupation of Constantinople by her became existant.

If, in spite of our understanding, Lord Derby points to the difficulties of eventually dislodging the Russian troops from Constantinople, his Lordship either overlooks circumstances of which Russia takes the greatest heed—that is our million of soldiers and our geographical position—or he doubts the sincerity of our declarations. We have done nothing to justify such doubt.

Your Excellency will be pleased to express yourself to Lord Derby in the above sense. You will further declare that we do not share the opinion of the British Government about the imminence of the Russian advance on Constantinople in this season. We expressed the same opinion we now hold upon that subject in June last, and as we proved to be in the right then, this opinion seems to hold still more good now, when the Russian army would have to cross the Balkans.

Your Excellency will add that in every case we maintain, word for word, one and all of our declarations.

Doc. 721 *Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 3.)*

(No. 430. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Berlin, November 26, 1877.

IN the course of a conversation I had to-day with Herr von Bülow, his Excellency asked what impressions I had brought from England in regard to a future settlement of the Eastern question.

I said that I was not in a position to tell him with any approach to precision what conditions of peace Her Majesty's Government would be prepared to sanction. But my private and personal impression was that while Her Majesty's Government would be willing in the general interest of European peace to entertain any fair and equitable arrangement between the belligerents for the improvement of the condition of European Turkey, they would not, in my opinion, be prepared to admit of any modifications of the existing regulations regarding the navigation of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles which would give exclusive privileges to Russia to the detriment of other Powers, nor would they sanction, I thought, any administrative measures in Bulgaria calculated to threaten the future independence of the Porte.

Herr von Bülow said that Count Münster wrote very much under the same impression as myself.

The German Government, his Excellency went on to say, were not acquainted with the conditions on which either Russia or Turkey would be willing to treat for peace. They wished to keep aloof on strictly neutral principles, and would only consent to take part in an attempt at mediation if pressed to do so by both belligerents and the Powers more directly concerned in Eastern affairs.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 722 *Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 13.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, December 12, 1877.

I AM informed that at a Council of some of the Ministers held to-day in the presence of the Sultan, it was decided to prosecute the war as if it were to be carried on to the last extremity. But there was a general feeling expressed in favour of an immediate peace. Three courses were proposed with a view to obtaining it. First, to appeal

directly to Russia, which is strongly urged by the German Ambassador, who gives the Turks to understand that by so doing they will obtain much better terms than if they have recourse to mediation; second, to ask England to mediate; and third, to apply to all the Great Powers for their collective mediation. This last course was approved, and draft note referred to in my telegram of yesterday No. 535 was discussed, but objected to on the ground that it did not offer sufficient guarantees for amelioration of condition of Christians, but no decision was taken. Porte is anxious for peace as soon as possible, to prevent Servia and Greece from taking part in the war, and putting forward claims.

It is proposed to bring Suleiman Pasha with part of his army into Roumelia, for the defence of Adrianople, and to cover Constantinople.

Doc. 723

Memorandum communicated by the Earl of Derby to Count Schouvaloff, December 13, 1877.

AT the outbreak of the present war those of its possible results which, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, would most directly affect British interests, were enumerated in a note addressed to Count Schouvaloff on the 6th May last.

Amongst these it was stated that Her Majesty's Government were not prepared to witness with indifference the passing of Constantinople into other hands than those of its present possessors.

The reply of the Russian Government, conveyed in Prince Gortchakow's despatch of $\frac{18}{30}$ th May, contained the following assurance on this point:—

“ Pour ce qui concerne Constantinople, sans pouvoir préjuger la marche ni l'issue de la guerre, le Cabinet Impérial répète qu'une acquisition de cette capitale est exclue des vues de Sa Majesté l'Empereur. Il reconnaît qu'en tous cas le sort de Constantinople est une question d'intérêt commun, qui ne peut être réglée que par une entente générale, et que si la possession de cette ville devait être mise en question, elle ne saurait appartenir à aucune des Puissances de l'Europe.”

While appreciating the courtesy and friendly character of this answer, Her Majesty's Government feel that it does not sufficiently meet the dangers against which they desire to guard. They are strongly of opinion—and opinion which the course of events tends still more to confirm—that the occupation of Constantinople by the Russian forces, even though it should be of a temporary character and for military purposes only, would be an event which it would on all accounts be most desirable to avoid.

They cannot conceal from themselves that if such an occupation appeared imminent, public feeling in this country, founded on a just appreciation of the consequences to be apprehended, might call for measures of precaution on the part of Great Britain from which they have hitherto felt justified in abstaining.

It is with the view of avoiding what might endanger seriously the good relations happily maintained between the two countries that Lord Derby has been charged by the Cabinet to express to the Russian Government their earnest hope that, should the Russian armies advance to the south of the Balkans, no attempt will be made to occupy Constantinople or the Dardanelles.

In the contrary event Her Majesty's Government must hold themselves free to take whatever course may appear to them necessary for the protection of British interests, but they sincerely trust and confidently believe that any such necessity will be averted by mutual understanding between the two Governments.

In making this communication they think it right to add that they will be willing, as they have been from the first, to avail themselves of any suitable occasion that may present itself for assisting in the work of mediation and in the restoration of peace.

(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 724

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 442. Secret and Confidential.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, December 13, 1877.

THE Russian Ambassador called upon me this afternoon by appointment, when I placed in his hands a Memorandum embodying a communication which Her Majesty's

Government had decided to make to that of Russia. I enclose a copy of this paper herewith for your Excellency's confidential information.*

I had already stated the general purport of the Memorandum to Count Schouvaloff on Saturday last in a conversation which I had held with him after the meeting of the Cabinet, and I pointed out to his Excellency that the opinions expressed had been formed before the fall of Plevna. The event, I said, had not altered or influenced the communication I was now making.

Count Schouvaloff promised to submit the contents of the Memorandum to his Government without delay.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 725 Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 13.)
(No. 537.)
(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, December 13, 1877, 1.45 P.M.

THE appeal to the Powers, slightly modified, was sent to the foreign Representatives to-day. Could anything more be done to restrain the Servians?

Doc. 726 Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 19.)
(No. 1016. Confidential.)
My Lord,

Paris, December 18, 1877.

IN the course of our conversation this afternoon respecting the Turkish application for the good offices of the neutral Powers, M. Waddington observed that he feared that this application would be rendered fruitless by the opposition of Russia to it.

He said that no communication respecting the views of Russia, Germany, or Austria had been made to him by the Russian, the German, or the Austrian Ambassador here, but that the reports he received from the French Representatives abroad, led him to think that Russia would refuse to admit mediation; that Germany would support her in the refusal; and that Austria felt great embarrassment, but would not separate herself from Russia and Germany.

He added, however, that according to the information which had reached him, Count Andrassy, while acquiescing in a direct and separate negotiation between Russia and Turkey, had not committed himself as to the form in which the result of the negotiations should be communicated to the other Powers, or as to the extent to which it should be subjected to the sanction of those Powers.

He added, however, that, for his own part, he felt sure that Russia and Germany had already quite settled between themselves what the terms of peace were to be.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

Doc. 727 The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.
(Secret.)
(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, December 19, 1877.

HER Majesty's Government propose to address an instruction to Lord A. Loftus, of which the following is the substance:—

Time has arrived when it has become their duty to make an effort to bring the war to a close. Course of events has now brought about the situation contemplated in Count Schouvaloff's communication of 8th June last, in which he stated that if the neutrality of the Powers were maintained, and Porte asked for peace before the Russians crossed the Balkans, the Emperor would consent not to cross that line. The Emperor used similar language to Colonel Wellesley on the 30th July.

The conditions of peace in question were those mentioned in the Memorandum inclosed in my despatch No. 202A of the 12th June last, beginning at "la Bulgarie," and ending "prompte paix." With regard to the Dardanelles, see the paragraph beginning "Pour ce qui concerne," ending "contre elle." Her Majesty's Government cannot let the

occasion pass without acquainting the Russian Government with the readiness of the Porte to ask for peace, as shown by its Circular of the 12th instant.

Lord A. Loftus is accordingly instructed to recall to the attention of the Russian Government the assurances received by Her Majesty's Government in June and July, and to inform the Emperor that Her Majesty's Government are willing to communicate to the Porte the conditions of peace then mentioned, not as expressing approval of, or assuming responsibility for, them in their present shape, but as a possible basis for an interchange of views, which may lead to more formal negotiations for the restoration of peace.

Despatch concludes by saying Her Majesty's Government are confident the Emperor will see in this offer proof of sincere desire to second His Majesty's wishes for prevention of further bloodshed.

Communicate this proposed instruction secretly to Count Andrassy, and say that Her Majesty's Government defer sending it until they have heard whether he has any observations to offer. They believe that in deciding on such a step they are following the line of policy indicated by him, and may succeed in bringing to a practical issue the overtures for peace made in the Porte's Circular with a view to a basis for peace being formulated on which Great Britain and Austria may subsequently act in concert.

Doc. 728 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 21.)

(No. 894. Most Confidential.)

My Lord,

Vienna, December 15, 1877.

ON the receipt of your Lordship's telegram of yesterday, on the subject of the despatch communicated to you by the Turkish Ambassador with a view to a European mediation for the restoration of peace, I requested an interview with Count Andrassy, and his Excellency answered that he would call later in the day at the Embassy, which he has now done.

He said that until he had taken the Emperor's orders he could only express personal opinions upon the steps which have been taken by the Porte; and reserving, therefore, to himself the right to formulate later his views in an instruction to Count Beust, he would submit them at once to your Lordship's consideration, in order that he might show how anxious he is that England and Austria should act in conformity with the understanding existing between them.

From the Turkish despatch, he said, it appeared that the Porte would be willing to place the general constitution for the Empire under the guarantee of Europe, an arrangement which, in his opinion, would be extremely detrimental to its interests; and, on the other hand, the Powers could not support a proposal for peace on such a basis without acting in contradiction to the London Protocol and to the declarations and proposals which they have already made to Turkey with respect to certain of its provinces.

He therefore submits to the consideration of Her Majesty's Government whether the Powers should not answer that they are most desirous to promote the conclusion of peace, but that if a proposal were made to them to use their good offices for that purpose on the basis indicated in the Turkish despatch they would not be able to accept it; and he said, if Her Majesty's Government should concur in this opinion, Austria and England together might suggest to the other Powers that they should all make a communication in this sense at Constantinople, thus indicating their readiness to support proposals for peace if made on a satisfactory basis.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Doc. 729 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 21.)

(No. 896. Very Confidential.)

My Lord,

Vienna, December 15, 1877.

WHILST speaking to me to-day on the subject of the Turkish overtures for peace, Count Andrassy told me in confidence that Prince Bismarck would be unwilling to make

any communication to Russia in which Germany might appear to be an advocate of the views of the Porte. His Excellency said he could not agree with his Highness on this point, though if the Porte were to ask formally for the good offices of the Powers on the basis of the general reforms granted under the Turkish Constitution, he could only forward their proposals to Russia, and would be unable to support them.

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Doc. 730

Mr. Monson to Sir A. Buchanan.—(Received at the Foreign Office, December 21.)

(No. 126.)

Sir,

Buda-Pesth, December 18, 1877.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 125 of yesterday, respecting the mass meeting held here on the 16th instant, I have to report that a debate was raised yesterday in the Lower House of the Diet upon the extent to which the Parliamentary privileges inherent in the person of the Prime Minister had been violated by the mob.

His Excellency, whose entrance into the House had been the signal for an uproarious outburst of enthusiasm, defended his conduct in refusing to see the deputation on the ground that, having declared that he would receive one of twenty-five persons only, he considered the additional presence of a large crowd as a demonstration contrived with a quasi-intimidating object.

Deputy Helfy explained that there had been no intention of committing an illegality, and that he and other Deputies had done their best to prevent any disturbance of the peace.

On the proposition of President Ghyczy an inquiry was agreed to.

The end of the sitting, which was throughout an excited one, was devoted to a speech by M. Uerményi (Right), giving notice of an interpellation respecting the Turkish proposals for mediation, and asking whether the Government was prepared to use its influence for the restoration of peace on the basis of the *status quo* guaranteed by the Treaties of 1856, to which Austria-Hungary is a party.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

Doc. 731 Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 21.)

(No. 464. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Berlin, December 16, 1877.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 460 of yesterday's date, I have the honour to add that the Turkish Circular of the 12th instant was submitted yesterday to the Emperor, and that His Majesty's reply was communicated to-day to the Turkish Ambassador.

The German Emperor declines altogether to accede to the Sultan's request for mediation.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 732 Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 21.)

(No. 466. Secret.)

My Lord,

Berlin, December 18, 1877.

IN the course of a conversation I had with Sadoullah Bey, the Turkish Ambassador, on the subject of the refusal of the German Emperor to entertain the Sultan's request for the mediation of the Powers, His Excellency told me that he had reason to believe that Prince Bismarck wanted Turkey to appeal direct to Russia for peace without the mediation of the other Governments, but that the Turkish Government would never do so, because they knew that by waiting until the Russian army approached the Dardanelles and threatened Constantinople, England must come to the rescue of her own interests, which were also those of the Sultan.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 733 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 21.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Secret.)

Vienna, December 20, 1877, 11.50 P.M.

COUNT ANDRASSY has just called on me to receive communication which I was instructed to make to him by your Lordship's telegram of yesterday, and as he was prepared for it by Count Beust, he brought with him the draft of a telegram—which will be forwarded to England to-morrow—deprecating the expediency of Her Majesty's Government making the conditions of peace formulated by Russia in June last the basis of a communication to St. Petersburg, or of their consenting to present them in any form whatever to the Porte. His Excellency said that the clause respecting future administrative institutions of Bulgaria could not be carried out without leading to an exodus of the whole Turkish population, and could never be accepted by the Porte, and to adopt it, and "rasure" of the fortresses, would be the first step to the destruction of the Ottoman Empire and the expulsion of Turks from Europe. He said he was surprised to find that Her Majesty's Government were under an impression that he had expressed no decisive objections to Russian conditions, as his whole correspondence respecting them showed the reverse, and that he had indeed ceased to develop his objections to them merely because Count Beust had informed him that Her Majesty's Government had declined to consider them further on Russia proposing to extend Bulgaria beyond the Balkans. He trusts, therefore, that Her Majesty's Government, with a view to the protection of British and also of Austrian interests, will reconsider expediency of allowing the conditions in question to form basis of any communication which they may address to Russia. He said he has always been of one opinion—that neither England nor Austria should intervene to stop war by an offer of mediation between the belligerents.

The safer course, he said, would be for the Porte to communicate directly to Russia her wish to make peace. If satisfactory conditions were then proposed to her so much the better, but of that there is no prospect; and the Porte would then come to Europe, as having guaranteed her independence and being interested in her welfare, to obtain for her the modification of conditions incompatible with both. He said that England and Austria could then defend with success the interests of Turkey as identic with their own.

His Excellency spoke very warmly at times, and hinted that two courses are open to adhesion of Austria, viz.: to go hand in hand with England to prevent destruction of Turkey and the substitution of Russian power in her European provinces, which he is prepared to do, if Her Majesty's Government do, with all resources of Empire, or he will be driven to advance interests of Austria in a different direction.

The war, he said, should be terminated by belligerents themselves; but the position of Turkey being different from state of European Powers, no peace can be made between them except with the concurrence of Europe. He mentioned to me that Bosnia and the Herzegovine had been offered to Austria by the Sultan and declined, but though he hoped it may long remain a province of Sultan, Austria alone can be His Majesty's heir.

Servia having asked him, through her Agent, to induce Porte to neutralize Bosnian frontier, he has said that he will answer an application on the subject if made to him in writing; and he intends to declare that Servia having made war on her own responsibility the Porte may invade her territory wherever she thinks fit, but that Servian troops in Bosnia would meet with those of Austria. He considers also that no increase of territory should be granted to her on the restoration of peace.

I did not fail to point out to his Excellency that Her Majesty's Government do not propose to express any approval or to assume any responsibility for Russian conditions, which I said would only be communicated to Porte if Russia wished it as a Russian counter-proposal to the overtures in its note of 12th instant; but he argued that any reference whatever to these conditions would place Her Majesty's Government in the position, at Constantinople, of having entertained as not unacceptable proposals in which every Turkish statesman, or any one who is thoroughly acquainted with the East and with the circumstances of Turkey in Europe, would see an intention of bringing about destruction of the Ottoman Empire.

All Count Andrassy's observations were not intended to be reported, but I have felt that I could not fully represent his opinions without reporting some of them, which may have been addressed merely to myself.

One thing is, I think, certain, that he is quite decided to maintain—by force, if necessary—in concert with Her Majesty's Government, the interests which they have agreed to consider common to Great Britain and Austria, and that he is most anxious

that no concession should be made to Russian diplomacy which he considers may weaken hands of two Governments hereafter, or diminish their influence in the councils of Sultan.

I ought to add, in explanation of his views, that he said that the real difficulties of Russia will begin when she wishes to make peace, whether it be on the northern or the southern side of the Balkans, and other Powers have a right to intervene.

With respect to Bulgaria, he also said that the Russian scheme could not be attempted without a Russian force remaining in the province after the conclusion of peace, which he could not permit.

Doc. 734

*Substance of a Telegram from Count Andrassy, dated Vienna, December 21, 1877.—
(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Count Beust, December 22, 5 P.M.)*

SIR A. BUCHANAN has placed before me a telegram from Lord Derby, communicating the substance of an instruction to Lord Augustus Loftus, stating at the same time that this instruction would not be sent off until my remarks upon it had been received in London.

This document centres in the following declaration to be addressed to Russia:—

“Whereas Russia on the 8th of June, 1877, communicated to Great Britain the conditions of peace, the acceptance of which by Turkey would make Russia forbear from crossing the Balkans, the British Government is now prepared to communicate these conditions to the Porte, without either criticising them or advocating their acceptance, but only with the view of facilitating an exchange of opinion between Russia and the Porte which might lead to peace negotiations.”

I told the British Ambassador, in reply, that he ought strongly to dissuade his Government from such a step. The fact alone of conditions, such as those involved in the first point of the Russian conditions, as to the erection of Bulgaria into a Vassal State, being officially communicated to the Porte, whether their acceptance were advocated or not, must persuade Turkey that England is a more deadly enemy to her than even Russia, that she has nothing more to hope from England, and that, therefore, she could not fare worse if she were to surrender to Russia at discretion.

I reminded Sir A. Buchanan that the first of the conditions further stipulated the withdrawal of all the Turkish functionaries and troops from Bulgaria, the raising of the fortresses, and the creation of a Bulgarian militia, while maintaining the suzerainty of the Porte: that is to say, the first of these conditions would create an autonomy in Bulgaria that would hand over the remaining Mahometan population without the protection of troops or of civil functionaries to the Bulgarians; this would probably mean to ill-treatment and massacres, from which they could only escape by emigration, in the same way as the whole of Servia had been evacuated by the Turkish population, although there the Turks had retained the right of garrisoning the fortresses. It would be utterly devoid of sense, I said, to expect that the Porte herself would ever establish such a state of things under the suzerainty of the Sultan, but even if this absurd idea were to be accepted it would be found impossible to realize it in practice.

Every autonomy, every administrative reform, requires money to carry it out. As Bulgaria herself could not find the money, all the projects of reform hitherto put forward were based on the assumption that Turkey would provide the necessary means. Now, is it seriously to be proposed that Turkey is to pay with her own money the cost of the ejection of her Mussulman subjects from Bulgaria, and of the evacuation of her Danubian fortresses?

Therefore I contend that there are only two alternatives for the future constitution of Bulgaria: either a completely severed independent Bulgaria, such as Servia is in fact (in which case every trace of Turkish dominion and Turkish inhabitants would vanish), or the maintenance of Bulgaria as a Turkish Pashalic, the utmost concession in this case being the nomination of Christian Pashas and an autonomous administration.

Each of these alternatives is feasible; the first would necessarily involve the throwing open of the land route to Constantinople (“Preisgebung des Landweges nach Constantinopel”).

Everything else is intrinsically absurd, and could only be put forward without the slightest account being taken of the state of things as it really exists.

Such an idea would not even lead to a controversy with Russia. It would collapse at the very first discussion as to its feasibility in practice.

I added that if the British Ministers did not agree with my opinion, they could ask Sir Henry Elliot for his.

He had never communicated his views on the subject to me, but I was prepared beforehand to accept his judgment.

The above telegram is to be read in a textual translation to Lord Derby, and notes of it may be taken by him for strictly confidential use.

Doc. 735

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 404. Most Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, December 22, 1877.

THE Austrian Ambassador called upon me this afternoon and read to me confidentially a telegram which he had received from Count Andrassy. Of the substance of this despatch I made a memorandum, of which a copy is inclosed herewith for your Excellency's own information only.*

Count Beust proceeded to state that he was in expectation of a further communication from Count Andrassy, of which he had received notice, and in which Count Andrassy intended to propose a different mode of action, in the event of Her Majesty's Government not being irrevocably committed to that which had been under discussion.

I expressed my willingness to receive this further communication, saying that I had abstained from mentioning in any quarter the step which we had contemplated taking until I had received the opinion of his Government upon it. I reminded Count Beust that the Russian proposals, our acceptance of which as a point of departure was so severely criticized in the telegram which he had read to me, had been discussed between us in June last; that I had then expressed a strong personal opinion as to the impossibility of their acceptance, whereas Count Andrassy had considered that, though they might not be acceptable in their present form, they ought not to be rejected, inasmuch as they might serve as a basis for future negotiations.

It was, therefore, in reality the suggestion of Count Andrassy himself on which I had acted, and I had done so mainly with a view to secure the co-operation of his Government. I did not, however, attach any special importance to this particular form of proceeding, and I should be quite ready to consider and discuss the alternative plan which Count Andrassy had announced.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 736

Count Andrassy to Count Beust.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby, December .)

(Secret.)

My Lord,

Vienna, December 22, 1877.

UP to the day before yesterday, when Sir Andrew Buchanan made his latest communication, we were not clear whether it was the intention of England to negotiate in the first instance with Russia on the basis of the Russian conditions communicated in June, or whether England, according to the agreement between us, was going previously to come to an understanding with us on the conditions of peace. In the former eventuality (which is now discarded) we could also have been obliged to sound Russia and to draw nearer to her ("mit Russland Fülung nehmen"). Russia would, in that case, easily have turned our mutual isolation to her profit, in order to exact her most sweeping conditions. If, on the contrary, England stands fast by our agreement, we can both of us, to our own good and to that of Europe, prevent Russia from bringing about a situation which would either establish Russia's preponderance in the East or lead to war.

Our standpoint remains the same, such as I often have explained it to your Excellency.

All along we have refused to take the initiative of mediation, and we still refuse to do so.

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Doc. 737 *Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 27.)*

(No. 1486. Secret.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, December 16, 1877.

GENERAL KLAPKA, for whom the Sultan entertains a very friendly feeling, tells me that a short time ago His Majesty authorized him to inform Count Andrassy, and, through the Austro-Hungarian Prime Minister, the Emperor, that Turkey would be ready to cede Bosnia and Herzegovina to Hungary if Austria would enter the field as the ally of Turkey in the present war with Russia. General Klapka received this morning a reply from Count Andrassy, to whom he had transmitted the Sultan's message. The Count answers that he does not intend to deviate from the policy which he has deliberately adopted, and which is neither to annex nor to occupy Bosnia nor Herzegovina, and not to permit, if he can prevent it, the formation of any new semi-independent Slav State in Turkey; and that he is resolved to maintain the principle of the *status* of the independence and integrity of the Turkish Empire. He directs General Klapka to thank the Sultan in his own and the Emperor's name for the offer made to them by His Majesty.

General Klapka informs me that the communications which have passed between himself and Count Andrassy in this matter, which were, of course, very secret, were transmitted and received in cypher by Count Zichy himself.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Doc. 738 *Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 27.)*

(No. 1482. Secret.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, December 13, 1877.

AFTER the ceremony of opening the Parliament this morning the Sultan sent Saïd Pasha to tell me that he wished to see me. His Majesty received me in one of the smaller apartments of the Palace. He seemed a good deal depressed by the fall of Plevna. I remarked that the heroic defence of Osman Pasha would take its place amongst the most glorious deeds in the annals of the Empire. This reflection, I said, might afford him some consolation. He replied that it did; but he added, with his usual good feeling, that the thought of the terrible loss of life, and the misery which this war was causing to his subjects, left him no rest.

"I should be most grateful to the Queen," His Majesty said, "if she would direct my compliments to be sent to Osman Pasha, and, at the same time, the assurance of my deep sympathy for him in his misfortune, and my high appreciation of the devotion that he has shown in my service and in that of his country; I am very anxious to learn the nature of his wound, and whether it be serious. I trust to the generosity of the Emperor of Russia to have proper care taken of him and to treat him kindly, as well as my troops who have been made prisoners, and who have suffered so greatly. I am desirous of receiving some details as to the fall of Plevna, for none have yet reached me, and I am especially anxious to learn the losses that my army has sustained."

His Majesty then said that he wished to take every means in his power to put a stop to hostilities, and asked me whether Her Majesty's Government would be willing to ascertain, without loss of time, whether the Emperor of Russia would consent to an armistice for about three months. If Her Majesty's Government found reason to believe that the Emperor would agree to an armistice, he was prepared to address a formal request to them to use their good offices to obtain one for him. His Majesty expressed his belief that if a suspension of military operations could be once obtained, terms of peace might be agreed to. His Majesty added that if he were relieved from the anxieties of war, he would be able to devote his thoughts and his time to measures for the improvement of the condition of his Christian and other subjects, which would satisfy Europe of his firm intention to carry out the reforms in the administration of his Empire to which he had pledged himself.

His Majesty further requested me to state to Her Majesty's Government that by procuring an armistice for him they would be rendering a service to Turkey for which she would ever be grateful to England. Her Majesty's Government had assured him that they would help him to obtain as favourable a peace as possible. He fully relied upon their friendship in this hour of need. The cardinal object of his foreign policy, His Majesty said with great earnestness, was a good understanding with England, and he was

resolved not to take any step whatever without first consulting with her and without her concurrence.

I replied to His Majesty that I would lose no time in informing your Lordship of what he had said to me, and in requesting your Lordship to transmit his message to the Queen. I observed that I was convinced that he need not be under any anxiety as to the treatment of Osman Pasha and of his troops who had been made prisoners at Plevna. The Emperor of Russia would be the first to respect men who had so nobly and faithfully performed their duty, and to treat them with all the kindness and consideration that their position would admit,

His Majesty then asked me whether I had seen the appeal addressed by the Porte to the Great Powers, which had just been sent to the Turkish Representatives abroad to be communicated to the Courts to which they were respectively accredited, and whether I approved of it. I answered that Server Pasha had shown me the draft of it, and that I had told his Excellency that although, personally I thought well of the step the Ministers proposed to take, I could not express an opinion upon it officially until I had first consulted your Lordship. I was now able to tell His Majesty, I said, that your Lordship had informed me that Her Majesty's Government considered the step a very wise one, but that all depended upon the conditions of peace which Turkey was prepared to accept.

His Majesty expressed his satisfaction that Her Majesty's Government approved of the appeal, and asked me whether I thought the other Governments to which it would be made would do so likewise, and, if so, whether they would at once make a collective offer to Russia of mediation. I replied that I was unable to answer His Majesty's question, but that I had no doubt the step taken by the Porte would lead to an exchange of communications between the Powers to which the appeal was addressed, and I trusted that the result would be an understanding between them that might eventually lead to peace. But I wished to remind him that, as your Lordship had pointed out, everything must depend upon the conditions which Turkey was prepared to accept.

His Majesty said that of course the conditions must be discussed; but he expressed his earnest hope that there would be no question of a Conference. He attributed the war to the Conference held at Constantinople. He was opposed to it from the beginning, and Mehemed Rushdi Pasha had assented to it against his express wishes and orders. It was in consequence of this breach of duty that he had removed Mehemed Rushdi from his office of Grand Vizier.

I asked His Majesty whether, in the event of an armistice being agreed to, he was prepared to put into execution such of the measures as were proposed at the Conference for the protection and better government of his Christian subjects as admitted of being carried out at once: a substantial proof might thus be given to Europe of his intention to introduce the reforms that he had promised. He answered that he was, and that he would not lose a moment, when hostilities were suspended, in doing so. He referred me to his Speech just read to the Parliament, in which those reforms were specified. He had anew, he said, pledged himself to the Constitution, which applied to all his subjects, without distinction of race or creed, and on which he believed the safety of his Empire to depend. His Majesty repeated, what he has frequently said to me before, that his good faith on this subject could not be doubted, as he had from his youth, fifteen years before he came unexpectedly to the throne, formed the deliberate conviction that a Constitution was absolutely necessary for the regeneration of his country. Such being the case, and the Constitution being his own work, it was to his honour as well as to his interest to maintain it.

I observed to His Majesty that he could not be surprised that sympathy was felt in England for the Christian populations of the Turkish Empire, who were known to be misgoverned and to be deprived of rights to which they were entitled, and which were enjoyed by their Mussulman fellow-subjects. If His Majesty, I said, had learnt that the Mussulmans of India, instead of being placed upon perfect equality with the other populations, were ill-treated, oppressed, and denied all redress by their English rulers, he would naturally feel sympathy for them, and would consider it his duty to use his influence on their behalf. There were certain grievances of a very grave character of which the Christians in Turkey had just cause to complain, and the existence of which was considered by Europe as a reproach to Turkey, and as calling for interference on its part. I might mention, for instance, the rejection of Christian evidence before Turkish tribunals, which amounted to an absolute denial of that justice to which every one of his subjects, whatever might be his race or creed, was entitled; and the want of protection for the lives and property of the Christians, as well as Mussulmans, in consequence of the absence of a properly organized and trustworthy police.

His Majesty replied that I would find that he had referred to both these subjects in his Speech, and that they were amongst the first to which his attention would be directed. He ended by saying that when peace was restored, and he had time to attend to the administration and civil affairs of his Empire, he hoped that I would often come to him that he might consult me on such matters. He looked, His Majesty said, to England alone for advice and help in his attempts to improve the condition of his country. He knew that she had its real welfare at heart, and that her counsels would be disinterestedly given in the true interests of Turkey.

I venture to think that it is of the utmost importance that the armistice, for which the Sultan is prepared to apply, should, if possible, be obtained. The moment would seem favourable for it. Russia has achieved a signal victory. Although she could now, no doubt, advance at once in irresistible force across the Balkans, and enter Roumelia, a winter campaign must, under any circumstances, entail great sacrifices of every kind upon her. The Turks may yet make a formidable defence at Adrianople, which may become another Plevna. In the meanwhile the Servians and Greeks will probably take part in the war, and greatly add to the danger to the peace of Europe. Moreover, a march of the Russians upon Adrianople would lead to an amount of misery and bloodshed to the defenceless populations, both Christian and Mussulman, that it is truly dreadful to contemplate. They are now flying in all directions before the Russian advance, terrified by the fate which befell those who remained in the northern districts of Roumelia on the Russian invasion in the summer. The immense number of fugitives who are now collected at Sofia, Philippopolis, and Adrianople, and in the surrounding villages, would again seek safety by moving to other districts. In this season of the year thousands upon thousands of aged men, women, and children would die from want and exposure, and the amount of human suffering would be incalculable. It might surely be hoped that those who have brought about this war from pure feelings of humanity would not view with indifference the horrors which its further prosecution would entail.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Doc. 739 *Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 28.)*
(No. 583.)
(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, December 28, 1877.

COUNT Zichy has just communicated to Porte answer of Austro-Hungarian Government to its appeal for mediation. It is to the following effect:—

“We earnestly desire cessation of bloodshed and the end of the war. In our opinion the Ottoman Circular does not, however, offer a basis of a nature to bring about peace. The duties of neutrality do not permit us to take the initiative for a mediation between two belligerents which would impose upon us the necessity of formulating conditions of peace. On the other hand, the Imperial and Royal Cabinet reserves to itself the right to participate in the negotiations as soon as they are commenced between the belligerents. It reserves to itself equally the legitimate influence to which it is entitled as a guaranteeing and bordering Power in the definitive settlement of the state of things in the East.”

Doc. 740 *The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.*
(No. 421. Most Confidential.)
Sir,

Foreign Office, December 28, 1877.

IN the course of a conversation which I had to-day with the Austrian Ambassador, his Excellency referred to the concluding passage of the telegram which he had placed in my hands on the 23rd instant, and in which Count Andrassy, after having explained the views of the Austrian Cabinet, expresses a desire to be put in possession of those of Her Majesty's Government.

I said, in reply, that, so far as concerned the general principles of action by which the two Cabinets would be guided, I saw nothing to add to the exchange of views which had taken place between us some months ago; that we had adhered to the understanding which had thus been come to, and should be ready to act accordingly in the negotiations which were likely to take place. If it were desired to discuss the terms of peace, I thought it would be obviously better to wait until we had ascertained what, on the one hand, the Russian Government intended to ask, and what, on the other hand, the Porte would be ready to concede.

It would be useless to agree upon proposals which might turn out not to be acceptable to either of the belligerents. If, however, there was any point on which Count Andrassy desired a further exchange of ideas beyond that which had already passed between the two Governments, I hoped that he would name it, and I should be willing to discuss the question.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 741 *Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 2.)*

(No. 2. Most Confidential.)

My Lord,

Paris, January 1, 1878.

YOUR Lordship will not have forgotten the earnestness with which the Duc Decazes, from time to time while he was Minister for Foreign Affairs, represented that if the forces of England should be occupied in the East, Prince Bismarck would seize the opportunity in order to make aggressions in the West.

In making these representations, the Duc Decazes was no doubt actuated, in great measure, by strong partisanship for Russia, and by the desire to prevent her being interfered with by England; but I suppose he really thought that France, if not Holland, might be in some danger if the forces of England, as well as those of Russia, were so occupied as to leave the field clear in Western Europe for any designs which Prince Bismarck might entertain.

M. Waddington approached the same subject in rather a different way yesterday.

Speaking to me most confidentially, he said that it was all important to France that England and Russia should not be involved in hostilities. He was, he added, most anxious that France should not be left *tête-à-tête* with Prince Bismarck, whether his Highness played the part of an enemy or of a tempter. In either character his Highness might be dangerous, although the French Government would, M. Waddington declared, be honest, and be firm in rejecting all suggestions that France should aggrandize herself at the expense of her neighbours.

M. Waddington remarked that the prospects of the Exhibition of 1878 gave France a special reason for desiring the cessation of war; but that a more urgent consideration with the French Government was the danger of other Powers becoming involved in the war in the East, if it went on much longer.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

Doc. 742 *Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 2.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Rome, January 1, 1877.

THE Russian Ambassador has communicated Prince Gortchakow's answer to Lord A. Loftus, to the effect that Russia desires no better than to make peace, but that in order to ascertain conditions for a suspension of hostilities the Turkish Commanders in Europe and Asia must address themselves to the Russian head-quarters, and that Russia will not admit mediation, even in a disguised form.

In view of this answer Italian Government feels it can do nothing under present circumstances in favour of peace. Minister for Foreign Affairs is most anxious to know impression of Her Majesty's Government respecting Russian reply.

Doc. 743

Prince Gortchakow to Count Schouvaloff.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Count Schouvaloff, January 2, 1878.)

St. Pétersbourg, le 16 Décembre, 1877.

LORD DERBY a bien voulu communiquer à votre Excellence un écrit où il exprime l'avis qu'une occupation de Constantinople par les troupes Russes, même d'un caractère temporaire et uniquement pour des considérations militaires, pourrait porter le sentiment public de l'Angleterre, basé sur une juste appréciation des conséquences à appréhender, à exiger des mesures de précaution dont le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté

Britannique s'est jusqu'à présent senti justifié de s'abstenir. Il devrait, dans ce cas, se considérer comme libre d'adopter toute ligne de conduite qui lui paraîtrait nécessaire pour la protection des intérêts Britanniques; mais il compte sincèrement et espère avec confiance que toute nécessité semblable sera écartée par une entente entre les deux Gouvernements.

Je transmets à votre Excellence un écrit en réponse à cette communication. Veuillez le placer sous les yeux de Lord Derby.

Notre auguste Maître est toujours disposé à se prêter à toute entente destinée à maintenir les bonnes relations entre les deux pays.

C'est dans cet ordre d'idées que nous croyons devoir signaler à l'attention de Lord Derby que des prévisions semblables à celles qu'il exprime, si elles sont connues à Constantinople, sont précisément de nature à rendre inévitables les éventualités contre lesquelles le Principal Secrétaire d'Etat de Sa Majesté Britannique a pour but de se prémunir. Si les Turcs acquièrent la conviction qu'une menace ou une attaque dirigée contre Constantinople ferait sortir l'Angleterre de la neutralité, leur calcul sera naturellement de prolonger leur résistance malgré son évidente inutilité, de manière à forcer la Russie à poursuivre ses opérations jusque dans la capitale. Il en serait autrement, selon toute probabilité, si l'attitude et le langage du Cabinet de Londres étaient de nature à bien persuader la Porte qu'elle n'a aucune assistance à attendre du dehors.

En pareil cas, elle se résignerait plus promptement à cesser une résistance qui ne peut qu'aggraver sa position.

Recevez, &c.

Doc. 744

Inclosure in Doc. 743.

Memorandum.

LES vues du Cabinet Impérial, quant aux conséquences éventuelles de la guerre, auxquelles l'Angleterre s'intéresse particulièrement, n'ont nullement varié.

Une acquisition de Constantinople n'entre pas plus aujourd'hui qu'avant la guerre dans les intentions de Sa Majesté l'Empereur. Sa Majesté Impériale persiste à considérer le sort de cette capitale comme un intérêt commun ne pouvant être réglé que par une entente générale. Sa Majesté Impériale persévère également dans l'opinion que, si la possession de Constantinople devait être mise en question, elle ne saurait appartenir à aucune des Grandes Puissances de l'Europe.

Toutefois, Sa Majesté l'Empereur se croit en droit et en devoir d'obliger la Turquie à conclure une paix solide, sérieuse, offrant des garanties efficaces contre le retour des crises permanentes qui troublent le repos de la Russie et celui de l'Europe.

Ces crises ne peuvent cesser qu'avec l'état de choses qui les engendre.

L'Europe entière a reconnu l'impossibilité de sa prolongation.

C'est pour y mettre un terme définitif que Sa Majesté l'Empereur a pris les armes et exposé ses peuples à des lourds sacrifices.

Ces sacrifices, supportés avec dévouement, font d'autant plus un devoir à Sa Majesté de ne point s'arrêter avant d'avoir obtenu un résultat qui préserve la Russie du renouvellement de semblables épreuves, qui satisfasse ses sentiments Chrétiens, garantisse son repos, et consolide en même temps la paix de l'Europe.

Ce but doit être atteint. Si l'obstination ou l'illusion de la Porte obligeaient Sa Majesté à poursuivre les opérations militaires, afin de dicter une paix répondant au but hautement proclamé de la guerre, Sa Majesté Impériale s'est toujours réservée et continue à revendiquer à cet égard la pleine liberté d'action qui est le droit de tout belligérant.

Mais après les assurances formelles qu'elle a maintes fois données, et qu'elle réitère, Sa Majesté ne saurait comprendre en quoi les intérêts Anglais, tels qu'ils ont été définis par les communications du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique, pourraient être lésés par la marche que Sa Majesté poursuit et doit poursuivre jusqu'à ce que le but de la guerre soit atteint.

Le Cabinet Impérial, appréciant l'intention amicale qui a dicté la communication de Lord Derby au Comte Schouvaloff, et animé du même désir de maintenir les bonnes relations entre les deux pays, ne croit pas pouvoir mieux y répondre qu'en priant le Secrétaire d'Etat de Sa Majesté Britannique de vouloir bien préciser plus clairement quels sont les intérêts Anglais qu'il juge pouvoir être affectés par les

éventualités de la guerre dans les limites où les assurances du Cabinet Impérial les ont circonscrites, afin de rechercher en commun les moyens de concilier ces intérêts avec ceux de la Russie, que Sa Majesté l'Empereur a le devoir de sauvegarder.

Doc. 745 Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 3.)

(Secret.)

(Telegraphic.)

Berlin, January 3, 1878.

MY confidential informant tells me that Count Andrassy and Prince Bismarck have advised Prince Gortchakow to adhere firmly to the principle of direct negotiation between Russia and Turkey, but at the same time to invite Her Majesty's Government to explain with more precision than heretofore what the interests of England are (which ?) Her Majesty's Government expect Russian Government to respect.

Count Andrassy, Prince Bismarck, and Prince Gortchakow have further agreed that Russian conditions of peace to be communicated to Turkey should be so framed as to avoid giving umbrage to France and Italy, or any cause for serious objection or interference to England.

Doc. 746 Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 7, 1878.)

(No. 731.)

My Lord,

St. Petersburg, December 29, 1877.

ON the receipt, on the 28th instant, of your Lordship's telegraphic instruction of the 27th instant, I requested an interview with Prince Gortchakow, who received me this morning.

I informed his Highness that Her Majesty's Government considered that the time had arrived when it has become their duty to make an effort to bring to a close the war unhappily existing between Russia and Turkey.

I stated that, in a communication made to Her Majesty's Government on the 26th instant, the Turkish Government had signified their readiness to ask for peace, and Her Majesty's Government felt that it is incumbent on them to make the Russian Government acquainted with this intimation from the Porte.

That with this view I had been instructed by your Lordship to inquire of the Russian Government if the Emperor will entertain overtures for peace.

I added, in the terms of your Lordship's instructions, that Her Majesty's Government were confident that His Imperial Majesty will see in this initiative on their part a proof of their sincere desire to second the wishes which they cannot doubt that His Majesty feels strongly for the prevention of further bloodshed.

Prince Gortchakow received this communication in a courteous and friendly spirit, and charged me to reply to the inquiry of Her Majesty's Government that Russia desired nothing better than to arrive at peace ("d'arriver à la paix"), but that for this purpose the Porte must address itself to the Imperial Commanders-in-chief in Europe and Asia, who will state the conditions on which an armistice can be granted.

Prince Gortchakow promised to inform Count Schouvaloff of the communication I had made by your Lordship's instructions, and of the reply he had given.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Doc. 747 Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 7, 1878.)

(No. 732. Confidential.)

My Lord,

St. Petersburg, December 29, 1877.

PREVIOUS to waiting on Prince Gortchakow to-day for the purpose of carrying out your Lordship's telegraphic instruction of the 27th, I embodied the terms of your Lordship's telegram in a note, of which I annex a copy, addressed to his Highness, with the intention of placing it in his hands.

After reading it and delivering it to Prince Gortchakow, and receiving his reply, I requested his Highness to give me his reply in writing, or to address it to Count Schouvaloff for communication to your Lordship. Prince Gortchakow observed that as I had

been instructed to address a verbal inquiry, he was of opinion that it was better to avoid a written communication (*d'éviter des écritures*), and that as I had received his reply there was no necessity for the note.

I replied that I had taken this course to cover my responsibility, but that I was ready to confine my communication to a verbal inquiry if his Highness would communicate it to Count Schouvaloff, together with the reply with which he had charged me. This his Highness promised to do, and as he had read the note I made no objection in assenting to his proposal.

In the course of our conversation Prince Gortchakow referred to the previous appeal addressed by the Porte on the 12th instant to the several Governments, observing that it had been declined by Germany and Austria, and, as he believed, by the other Governments.

His Highness expressed his doubts as to the sincerity of the Porte for peace, stating that it had not yet given up all hopes of receiving aid from England. His Highness seemed also to think that the sudden convocation of the English Parliament might reanimate these hopes, and thus indispose the Porte to those concessions on which alone peace could be obtained. Prince Gortchakow further observed that no peace could be durable without efficient guarantees for the future government of the Christian provinces, for which, in his opinion, the Turkish Constitution did not suffice, and he stated very explicitly that without sufficient guarantees there would be no security against the renewal of the former state of misgovernment.

He remarked that the principle of centralisation introduced by Ali and Fuad Pashas had been in great mistake, and that until this system was abolished, there could be no amelioration of government. His Highness strongly maintained that Russia had no wish or intention of destroying the Turkish Empire in Europe. On the contrary, the principal aim of the Imperial Cabinet was to maintain the Sultan at Constantinople, placing the Christian provinces under his suzerainty, as were Roumania and Servia.

If, said His Highness, the Turkish Empire in Europe should break up, England, and England alone, will have been the cause of it.

I strongly repelled this charge, stating that Russia, and Russia alone, was responsible for this needless war and for all the consequences of it.

Prince Gortchakow mentioned an armistice or suspension of hostilities as necessary in order that the conditions of peace might be agreed upon, but it was evident to me that he discards any idea of peace being concluded under foreign mediation.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Doc. 748

. Inclosure in Doc. 747.

Lord A. Loftus to Prince Gortchakow.

Mon Prince,

St. Petersburg, December 28, 1877.

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby, Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to state to your Highness that, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, the time has arrived when it has become their duty to make an effort to bring to a close the war unhappily existing between Russia and the Porte.

In a communication made to Her Majesty's Government on the 26th instant, the Turkish Government have signified their readiness to ask for peace, and Her Majesty's Government feel that it is incumbent on them to make the Russian Government acquainted with this intimation from the Porte.

With this view I am instructed by the Earl of Derby to inquire of your Highness if His Majesty the Emperor will entertain overtures for peace.

Her Majesty's Government are confident that His Imperial Majesty will see in this initiative on their part a proof of their sincere desire to second the wishes which they cannot doubt that His Imperial Majesty feels strongly for the prevention of further bloodshed.

I avail, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Doc. 749 Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 7, 1878.)

(No. 734.)

My Lord,

St. Petersburg, December 29, 1877.

IN the course of conversation this morning Prince Gortchakow referred to a memorandum which he had received from your Lordship through Count Schouvaloff, and stated that he had sent off by post to Count Schouvaloff an answer to it in the same form, as a memorandum without signature.

His Highness said that it was expressed in the same friendly tone which characterized your Lordship's communication, and he appeared hopeful that it would lead to an understanding between the two Governments.

He spoke of England in the most friendly terms, and of the kind and hospitable reception he had received there some years ago, adding that he had sent his son as First Secretary to the Embassy in London in order that he might study the institutions of a country for which he had the highest admiration.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Doc. 750 Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 7, 1878.)

(No. 742. Confidential.)

My Lord,

St. Petersburg, December 25, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that Prince Gortchakow returned to this capital on the 22nd instant, and has resumed the direction of the Imperial Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

I called on his Highness this morning, and after an exchange of compliments I stated that I had no communication to make to his Highness, nor had I received any official information bearing on the war.

Prince Gortchakow observed that the moment was one of considerable importance. He said that he could not understand the cause of the feverish alarm and agitation in England. "We have," said his Highness, "been frank and straightforward with England. At the commencement of the war we were told of British interests. Well, when they were submitted in form, we gave the most explicit assurances that these interests should be duly respected, and they were considered as satisfactory to your Government. There was the Isthmus of Suez; the road to India; the possession of Constantinople. What could we do more? We cannot beforehand state that we shall not cross the Balkans; that we may not be under the necessity of advancing to Constantinople (although we have no wish to do so), in order to force our enemy to sue for peace. But we have given solemn assurances that we have no intention of keeping possession of Constantinople; and we have further pledged ourselves to respect any British interests which may be supposed to be endangered. Now," continued his Highness, "what are those British interests which all of a sudden are springing up and producing this alarm? Name them to us, and we shall then know what is their nature, their value, and how they can best be safe-guarded."

I replied to his Highness that every country must be the judge of its own interests, and that their safeguard and protection could not be confided to other hands but its own. It could not be denied that the passage of the Balkans by a colossal Russian army constituted a danger which threatened the existence of the Turkish Empire in Europe, and it was therefore incontestably the duty of England, in view of such a contingency, to be prepared for the protection of her interests, but that I could not see that the performance of this duty intimated any intention of hostility, or even bore the character of an inimical act towards Russia.

Prince Gortchakow refuted the idea that the existence of the Turkish Empire in Europe would be threatened by the advance of a Russian army across the Balkans, and added that should it so happen, it was England and England alone that would be the cause of it.

"If," said his Highness, "you should determine to occupy Gallipoli, or any other point, and to send your fleet into the Bosphorus, you will be encouraging Turkey to prolong the resistance, and you will be thereby participating in her hostility to Russia."

To this I could not agree, and I again repeated that in my opinion the measures which might be necessary for the protection of our interests did not in any way imply

hostility to Russia, but could only be considered of a precautionary and defensive nature.

I observed to his Highness that I could not understand why such vehement invectives were launched against England by the Russian press, whilst during the whole course of the war our attitude had differed in no respect from that of Austria and Germany.

Prince Gortchakow replied that he could not admit that we had maintained the same attitude as Austria and Germany.

The two Imperial Governments had acted and were acting in perfect accord, and in harmony with that of Russia.

He stated that the policy of the Austrian Cabinet had been consistent throughout, and that he placed entire confidence both in Austria and Germany. As regarded France, his Highness observed, her attention has been absorbed in her internal affairs, and could not therefore be directed to external questions; but he had received very satisfactory assurances from the new French Minister for Foreign Affairs.

England, therefore, he said, was quite isolated.

I replied to his Highness that it was not the first time that England had taken her own line of policy, and that she was sufficiently great and powerful to defend her own interests alone.

His Highness then said that he had always supported a pacific solution of the Eastern Question. "I have always," said his Highness, "admired and respected England, and I have always wished to maintain amicable relations with her; but I can never prostrate myself before her (*'mais me prosterner devant elle jamais !'*)"

I then observed that there appeared to exist a certain confidential and secret understanding between the Three Imperial Cabinets which was concealed from the other European Governments, and that this circumstance, whether correct or not, was calculated to create distrust and suspicion.

Prince Gortchakow replied with some warmth that he could not make any confidential communication to England, because he felt that it would be immediately transmitted to Constantinople. His Highness referred to the state of parties in England, and said that he did not believe that a policy of action which was apparently the object of the Prime Minister would have the general support of the nation. I endeavoured to undeceive his Highness in this belief, stating that he must not indulge in the same illusions which led to such regrettable consequences at a former period. To this his Highness replied that "he made to himself no illusions, and had no occasion for them, as the course he had to pursue was clear and perfectly defined. He had always been frank and truthful, and had never indulged in finesse, which he considered neither suitable to nor in consonance with the interests and dignity of a great Power."

This conversation (which was conducted throughout in a very friendly tone and manner) referred chiefly to generalities.

I consider the important points of it to be as follows :—

1. An anxiety on the part of Prince Gortchakow to ascertain what will be the course taken by Her Majesty's Government as regards the protection of British interests, and a certain feeling of alarm respecting it.

2. The reference to Austria and Germany seemed to confirm the existence of a secret understanding between the Three Imperial Courts in regard to the future results of the war. This understanding may probably refer to the concessions to be demanded of Turkey, and the unwillingness to communicate them may possibly arise from a fear that they would be unacceptable to England.

3. The statement of Prince Gortchakow, although vague, that the occupation of Gallipoli by England, and the entry of the English fleet into the Bosphorus, would be interpreted by Russia as affording protection to Turkey, and as a participation with Turkey in hostility to Russia.

4. My endeavours to impress on his Highness that England is bound to protect her own interests if she considers them menaced, and not to confide that protection to others, and that any action taken by England with that view did not necessarily portray any act inimical to Russia.

I trust that the language I have held will be approved by Her Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Doc. 751 *Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received January 7, 1878.)

(No. 495. Secret.)

My Lord,

Berlin, December 29, 1877.

THE same person who told me, on the 26th instant, as I telegraphed to your Lordship, that Count Andrassy and Prince Bismarck were agreed to oppose mediation and promote direct negotiations between Turkey and Russia, assures me this evening that they have now again telegraphically agreed with Prince Gortchakow that his answer to the offer of mediation from Her Majesty's Government should express the readiness of the Emperor of Russia to make peace, but propose that the preliminaries should be negotiated between the Turkish and Russian military authorities in Turkey.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 752 *Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received January 7.)

(No. 3. Secret.)

My Lord,

Berlin, January 3, 1878.

A WELL-INFORMED friend tells me confidentially that he has reason to believe that Count Andrassy and Prince Bismarck have advised Prince Gortchakow, in his communications with Her Majesty's Government, to adhere to the principle of direct negotiation between Russia and Turkey, but to invite her Majesty's Government at the same time to explain frankly, and with more precision than heretofore, what the interests of England and Her Majesty's Government require Russia to respect.

He also thinks that Prince Bismarck, Count Andrassy, and Prince Gortchakow have agreed that it will be prudent so to frame the conditions of peace to be communicated to the Porte that they may not give umbrage to the Governments of France and of Italy, and afford no cause for serious objection or interference to England.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 753 *Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.*—(Received January 7.)

(No. 5.)

My Lord,

Berlin, January 3, 1878.

IN obedience to your Lordship's instruction No. 454 of the 17th ultimo, inclosing copy of your Lordship's No. 562 of the same date to Her Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg, inquiring whether the Emperor of Russia would entertain overtures for peace, I addressed the note, copy of which was inclosed to your Lordship in my despatch No. 489 of the 29th ultimo, to the German Minister for Foreign Affairs, expressing the hope that the initiative thus taken by Her Majesty's Government to bring the war to a close would met with the support of the German Government.

I now have the honour to transmit herewith translation of the answer I have just received from his Excellency.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 754

Inclosure in Doc. 753.

M. von Bülow to Lord Odo Russell.

(Translation.)

M. l'Ambassadeur,

Berlin, January 3, 1878.

I HAVE had the honour to receive your Excellency's communication of the 29th ultimo, inclosing copy of an instruction given by the Earl of Derby on the 27th of the same month to Her Britannic Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg, and I lost no time in laying the same before His Majesty the Emperor and King, my most august Sovereign,

His Majesty received the news contained in these documents with interest. He shares with the British Government the expression of a lively wish that the war now

raging between Russia and Turkey may soon come to an end by the conclusion of peace.

The absolutely neutral and reserved attitude which has given the measure of German policy since the outbreak of the war—a policy not directly concerned in Eastern affairs—will, however, not even now permit the Government of His Majesty, at the instigation of one of the belligerents, to initiate a mediation with the other, or to take any part in such a step.

The Imperial Government has already expressed itself in this sense in answer to the request addressed to it by the Porte in its Circular of the 12th ultimo, respecting the entering into preliminary peace negotiations with the Russian Cabinet.

Whilst I have the honour to inform your Excellency of this perception of the situation on the part of the Imperial Government, I avail, &c.

(Signed) V. BULOW.

Doc. 755 Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 7.)

(No. 7. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Berlin, January 5, 1878.

IN obedience to the instruction conveyed to me by your Lordship's telegram of yesterday's date, I informed the Minister for Foreign Affairs, confidentially, of the substance of the communications which have passed between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of Russia, through Her Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg, on the subject of the armistice Russia is willing to grant to Turkey.

The German Government had already been made acquainted with the nature of these communications through their Ambassador at St. Petersburg, but Herr von Bülow was, nevertheless, much obliged to your Lordship for authorizing me to let him know the modifications Her Majesty's Government had suggested to Prince Gortchakow's views.

His Excellency said that he had no reason to doubt the sincerity of Prince Gortchakow's desire to meet the views of Her Majesty's Government, which, to judge from the Earl of Carnarvon's recent speech, were animated by a conciliatory spirit well calculated to bring about a satisfactory agreement between England and Russia. Nothing, his Excellency said, could give greater satisfaction to the German Government than the realization of such an agreement between those two great Powers.

I replied that the influence of the German Government could be beneficially exercised in bringing about the agreement they desired, for it should not be forgotten that England had interests in Turkey which Her Majesty's Government would know how to protect under all circumstances.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL

Doc. 756 Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 7.)

(No. 8. Secret.)

My Lord,

Berlin, January 5, 1878.

AUTOGRAPH letters have recently been exchanged between the three Emperors, the contents of which are not known, but the effects of which has been to alarm the German Emperor in regard to the maintenance of the general peace of Europe.

In consequence His Majesty sent his favourite Aide-de-camp, Count Lehndorf, who is a personal friend of Prince Bismarck, to Varzin, to talk over the situation, and ask him what he thought was likely to happen.

Count Lehndorf has now returned, and as far as I have been able to ascertain the answer he brought from the Chancellor to the Emperor was to the following effect:—

“Prince Bismarck sees no cause of alarm for Germany in the present situation, and, for his own part, is quite satisfied with the course events are taking. He is glad England has approached Russia to facilitate the negotiation of an armistice and the conclusion of peace. He feels sure that Russia will meet England in a conciliatory spirit, for it is in her own interest to do so. He hopes, therefore, that the present exchange of ideas between England and Russia will lead to a practical understanding in regard to their respective interests in Turkey.

"If it does not, and the war continues, he sees no reason why Germany should depart from her present neutrality, since the war does not affect her interests. And if things came to the worst, and England's interests compel her to go to war with Russia, it will be best for Germany and Austria not to interfere, but to remain strictly neutral while England and Russia fight it out, as the neutral Powers have hitherto done in regard to Turkey and Russia.

"All things considered, it is best for Germany that the Powers concerned should now settle the Eastern question once for all, than put it off by compromises for the present, and live in expectation of another Eastern war in the future."

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 757

Server Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, January 7.)

(Télégraphique.)

Constantinople, le 5 Janvier, 1878.

JE m'empresse de compléter ma dépêche télégraphique d'hier. Ainsi que Lord Derby en a informé le Cabinet de St. Pétersbourg, la Sublime Porte, en s'adressant à l'Angleterre, n'avait pas proposé un armistice; sa Seigneurie nous communique par conséquent la réponse de la Russie sur ce point. En effet, nous avons demandé tout simplement la médiation de l'Angleterre, et nous avons lieu de considérer notre demande comme acceptée par le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique par le fait même que Lord Derby a bien voulu transmettre à l'Ambassadeur Anglais à St. Pétersbourg notre dépêche à ce sujet en date du 26 Décembre. Ainsi qu'il résulte de mon télégramme d'hier, le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté a accepté en principe l'armistice proposé par la Russie; et, en attendant que les bases en soient arrêtées, nous avons exprimé le désir de voir les armées des deux parties belligérantes s'abstenir de toute opération militaire. Pour ce qui est de ces bases, il faudrait, comme Lord Derby l'a déclaré dans sa dépêche à Lord Loftus, que les deux Gouvernements de la Turquie et de la Russie s'entendent au préalable entre eux pour les déterminer afin que l'armistice fût d'une application pratique. Toutefois, la Sublime Porte, n'étant pas en communication avec la Russie, ne serait-il pas plus à propos et plus naturel que le Cabinet de St. James veuille bien arrêter avec celui de St. Pétersbourg les bases principales de l'armistice?

Une fois ces bases déterminées et acceptées par la Sublime Porte, nous donnerons immédiatement aux Commandants des armées Ottomanes en Europe et en Asie l'ordre de s'entendre avec les Commandants des armées Russes sur les détails de l'armistice. Il va sans dire que, le désir de la Russie de voir la cessation de l'effusion du sang également constaté, l'armistice ne saurait avoir pour but que le rétablissement de la paix. Il est donc évident que les conditions de l'armistice seront arrêtées en même temps que la base des négociations pour la paix, base qui est le Traité de Paris garantissant l'intégrité et l'indépendance de l'Empire. Quant à la Serbie et au Monténégro, une suspension d'hostilités pourrait être conclue avec ces Principautés.

Veillez soumettre cette dépêche à son Excellence Lord Derby, qui voudra bien, je n'en doute pas, convenir, dans son esprit de haute équité, de la justice des considérations y contenues.

Doc. 758

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 29.)

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, January 7, 1878.

MUSURUS PASHA has left with me a telegram from Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs stating that the Porte had reason to suppose that Her Majesty's Government had accepted the office of mediation, and proposing that we should settle with Russia the principal bases of the armistice which the Porte has accepted in principle.

I told his Excellency, in reply, that this was impossible, as I felt sure that no such proposal addressed to the Russian Government would meet with a favourable reply, and I pointed out that it was not the fact that England had accepted the position of a mediator; we had simply offered to inquire whether the Emperor of Russia would entertain overtures of peace.

I took occasion again to remind the Turkish Ambassador, as on a previous occasion, that we had declared at the outset our intention of maintaining neutrality, except on certain conditions which we had defined as involving British interests.

Doc. 759 Substance of Telegram from the Earl of Derby, dated January 4, 1878.

(Confidential.)

IN reply to the communication from Her Majesty's Government of the 27th ultimo, inquiring if the Emperor of Russia would entertain proposals for peace, Prince Gortchakow informed Lord A. Loftus, on the 29th ultimo, that Russia desired nothing better than to arrive at peace, but that for that purpose the Porte must address itself to the Commanders-in-chief in Europe and Asia, who will state the conditions upon which an armistice can be granted.

Lord A. Loftus has been instructed (3rd January) to express the satisfaction of Her Majesty's Government with Prince Gortchakow's declaration to the effect that Russia desired nothing better than to arrive at peace, and he is also to state that although the Porte has not made any application for an armistice, they would not be unwilling to convey the suggestion of the Government of Russia to Turkey, provided the communication were made in a manner which, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, might lead to a practical result.

The projected armistice must, of course, include operations in Asia as well as in Europe, and as each would not be complete without the concurrence of Servia and Montenegro, it is indispensable that the conditions on which it is granted should be discussed between the two Governments, and not merely between the Generals commanding portions of the contending forces. Her Majesty's Government invite the attention of Prince Gortchakow to this modification of his Highness' views.

Her Majesty's Government fully appreciate the distinction recognized by him between an armistice which may well be arranged between the immediate belligerents and the conditions of peace in which other Powers also are interested.

Doc. 760

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, January 8, 1878, 11.15 A.M.

HER Majesty's Government have received and considered Prince Gortchakow's reply to their suggestion conveyed in your Excellency's telegram of the 5th instant.

They understand from it that the Russian commanders-in-chief have received from the Central Government the instructions necessary to enable them to discuss the terms on which an armistice can be concluded. Under these circumstances, the conditions which seemed to Her Majesty's Government essential are practically fulfilled, and they are ready to convey Prince Gortchakow's message to the Porte, and to advise the latter to send delegates to the Russian head quarters similarly commissioned to negotiate an armistice.

Doc. 761

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, January 12, 1878.

WITH reference to your telegram No. 40, it is impossible that the Porte can have supposed, from anything that I have telegraphed to you, that an armistice had been agreed to through the intervention of Her Majesty's Government.

There was no question of anything beyond the opening of negotiations, and the conditions were absolutely unknown.

The order for suspension of hostilities on the Turkish side, if given, must have been given for their own reasons, and on their own authority.

Doc. 762

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, January 12, 1878.

ASCERTAIN whether any objection would be offered by the Sultan to a direction being given to the British fleet to anchor within the Dardanelles, it being clearly understood that this step is no departure from the attitude of neutrality hitherto maintained, but merely a precaution to keep the channel from being closed.

You had better not interfere as to the lines of Boulair, or in any way with the disposition of the Turkish forces.

Doc. 763

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, January 12, 1878.

IN answer to the inquiry contained in the last paragraph of Prince Gortchakow's Memorandum of the 16th December, Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that any operations tending to place the passage of the Dardanelles under the control of Russia would be an impediment to proper consideration of terms of final settlement.

Ask Prince Gortchakow whether he is willing to give assurance to Her Majesty's Government that no Russian force shall be sent to the peninsula of Gallipoli.

Doc. 764

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 14.)

(No. 50.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, January 14, 1878, 2 P.M.

REPORTS have reached me that the Russians are marching a detachment of troops directly on Gallipoli. I do not know how far they may be trustworthy; but it is my duty, after the many proofs of Russian duplicity, to put Her Majesty's Government on their guard. Emperor of Russia has said acquisition of Constantinople does not enter "into his plans," but he has said nothing of the kind as regards Gallipoli. Prince Gortchakow, in his communication to Count Schouvaloff, in answer to your Lordship's Memorandum of the 13th December, carefully avoids all mention of the Dardanelles, although your Lordship had referred to them as well as to Constantinople.

Doc. 765

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 14.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Strictly Confidential.)

Vienna, January 14, 1878.

DURING Palace dinner to-day, the Emperor having said to me that it would be now necessary to speak firmly at St. Petersburg to prevent Russia going too far, I observed that I understood His Majesty had already done this, and he answered, "We are now doing so, and we stated distinctly to Russia, as we have done from the first, 'what we can tolerate, and what we cannot tolerate,' with every wish to maintain our friendship with her." After dinner, as M. Orczy, who was present, expressed an opinion that armistice will be concluded in ten days or a fortnight, and peace in six weeks, I asked whether he expected that the peace would be one which Austria-Hungary would consider satisfactory, and he replied, "There can be no peace unless it be satisfactory to Austria." I communicated to Count Andrassy last night the substance of your Lordship's telegram of yesterday respecting Gallipoli, and M. Orczy thinks that Russia will endeavour to satisfy Her Majesty's Government on that subject.

Doc. 766

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, January 14, 1878, 6.53 P.M.

IN order to avoid possible misconception, and in view of the reports which have reached Her Majesty's Government, your Excellency should state to Prince Gortchakow that in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government any Treaty concluded between the Government of Russia and the Porte affecting the Treaties of 1856 and 1871 must be a European Treaty, and would not be valid without the assent of the Powers who were parties to those Treaties.

Doc. 767

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 15.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Confidential.)

Vienna, January 15, 1878, 7.20 P.M.

I COMMUNICATED to Count Andrassy the substance of telegrams which your Lordship sent, viz., to St. Petersburg and Constantinople, respecting right of other Powers to be parties to any Treaty affecting those of 1856 and 1871, and he expressed satisfaction at the language of Her Majesty's Government, observing at the same time that he had been under some apprehension from the inquiry which your Lordship had

made to St. Petersburg respecting Gallipoli, that Her Majesty's Government were withdrawing from the position they had previously occupied in the question. He told me that he had yesterday desired the Austrian Ambassador at St. Petersburg to express his painful surprise at Grand Duke Nicholas insisting on preliminaries for peace taking precedence of an armistice, and he has intimated confidentially that if it is intended to shut out Austria from the negotiations, he would find means of making her right to be heard respected. I asked how he would do so, and whether he was prepared to mobilize army. He answered there are many things he can do, but as a mobilization would be expensive, it would not be resorted to as yet. To the Turks he has intimated that he has always told them that Austria intended to be a party to negotiations for peace as a guaranteeing and neighbouring Power, but that if they think fit to make peace independently of Austria, she will protect her own interests in another way.

Doc. 768 Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 15.)

(Telegraphic.)

St. Petersburg, January 15, 1878, 3 30 P.M.

BEING slightly indisposed and unable to go to Prince Gortchakow at his invitation to receive verbal answer about Gallipoli, I requested his Highness, by note, to send me a written answer in the form of a Memorandum, as I had delivered to him. He sent, however, Baron Jomini as bearer of a verbal reply to the following effect:—

“Russian Government has no intention of directing their military operations on Gallipoli, unless Turkish regular troops should concentrate there. They hope further that, in putting question, Her Majesty's Government do not contemplate an occupation of Gallipoli, which would be a departure from their neutrality, and would encourage Porte to resistance.”

This reply has been telegraphed to Count Schouvaloff.

I requested Baron Jomini to send me a written reply in the form of a Memorandum, which I have since received.

Doc. 769

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, January 17, 1878, 6.15 P.M.

WITH reference to the telegram from Count Andrassy communicated to me yesterday and repeated to you by me to-day, ask Count Andrassy whether he considers the language of the Turkish Plenipotentiaries satisfactory.

Her Majesty's Government do not think that the Porte should be encouraged to break off negotiations and allow the Russian armies to advance under the expectation that Austria and England will afford military aid to preserve the independence and integrity of the Ottoman Empire, if by that it is meant to exclude the idea of territorial concessions of all kinds which the events of the war may have now made imperative.

Her Majesty's Government do not understand the distinction apparently drawn between “the deliberations which preceded the conclusion of the Treaty of Paris” and the Treaty itself.

Doc. 770

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(Telegraphic.)

(Secret.)

Foreign Office, January 17, 1878, 6.35 P.M.

IN answer to an inquiry from Count Beust, which Count Andrassy appears to have instructed him to make before you communicated my telegram to Lord A. Loftus of the 14th, I stated that Her Majesty's Government are most desirous to act in complete and cordial co-operation with the Austrian Government, and that they adhere firmly to the existing understanding with Austria, and are determined to maintain it.

Doc. 771

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(Telegraphic.)

(Secret.)

Foreign Office, January 17, 1878, 5.30 P.M.

ASK Count Andrassy what he proposes should be done in case of necessity to give effect to the declarations made by the English and Austrian Governments to Russia respecting the conclusion of a separate peace between Russia and the Porte.

Doc. 772
(Telegraphic.)
(Most Secret.)

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

Foreign Office, January 17, 1878, 8.30 P.M.

IN communicating the telegram repeated to you this evening, Count Beust said that in his personal opinion, the Turkish Plenipotentiaries, notwithstanding their assurances, would be compelled by military necessities to sue for peace, and accept whatever conditions Russia chose to impose, leaving Austria and England to give effect to their declaration as to separate Treaty in the best way they could.

He also said he was impressed with the necessity for full understanding between English and Austrian Governments, and had telegraphed and written to ask Count Andrassy what he was prepared to do "par terre?" He knew feeling in England was looking for an ally, and that if Austria had anything to propose now was the time.

He repeated declaration that there was no secret understanding with Russia, merely a point of contact between three Emperors.

Doc. 773 *Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 18.)*
(Telegraphic.)
(Secret.)

Vienna, January 18, 1878.

IN reply to your telegram of yesterday, 6.15 P.M., Count Andrassy states that he considers language of Turkish Plenipotentiaries to Count Zichy satisfactory, which I understand, though Count Andrassy's telegram to Count Beust, referred to by your Lordship, was not repeated to me identic with that of Grand Vizier, as reported in Mr. Layard's telegram of the 16th instant.

With respect to wish of Her Majesty's Government that the Porte should not be encouraged to break off negotiations by an expectation that the absolute territorial integrity of Turkish Empire may be maintained through assistance from England and Austria, he says that no ground has been given to the Porte for entertaining such hope; but while agreeing with you that the Porte should not be encouraged to decline all territorial concession, he thinks it would be dangerous, in the present state of panic at Constantinople, to discourage Turkish Ministers from expecting any material aid whatever.

Therefore, and with a view also to convince Russia that England will seriously resist her pretensions, he is strongly of opinion that the Porte should be induced to allow Her Majesty's fleet to proceed to Constantinople. He has not the slightest apprehension that Russia will resent the measure as an act of war, as, under the circumstances, Her Majesty's Government would be perfectly justified in adopting it as a mere precaution for the protection of British interests; and he hoped that Her Majesty's Government will decide on action; that they will not limit it to the occupation of Gallipoli, which would not prevent a Russian occupation of Constantinople. With respect to that eventuality, he said that, without having come to a final decision, he was now more inclined to oppose it, as the danger of its occurring increased, and that, if he consented to it at all, he would insist on an army merely entering by one of the gates and leaving by another. He said that he had just received a telegram from Count Zichy reporting that occupation of Bulgaria for two or three years by Russian force will be proposed, and I said that I had reason to believe such measure is contemplated. He answered that it could not take place without Russia remaining also in Roumania, to which he could not consent; and as the measure would most certainly eventually lead to war, he would prefer accepting war at once. Feeling confident, however, that the pretensions the two Governments resist will be abandoned by Russia, as she cannot meet an attack on her rear by Austria, combined with English naval and military action on her front.

He says that any movement on the part of Austria would be war, as her first step would bring her into collision with Russian troops in Roumania, and she must therefore, on that account, delay action as long as possible, and also on account of great expense of mobilization of the army; but Russia knows, and Her Majesty's Government may rest assured, that what he has declared he will do under certain circumstances will be done should the time for action come. His Excellency believes that his late declaration at Petersburg has already produced a favourable influence on the policy of Russia, without, however, bringing her pretensions within reasonable limits, and he is convinced that peace will be preserved if Her Majesty's Government, by sending the fleet to Constantinople, should prove that the Russian party in England cannot prevent their action; and he believes, if Her Majesty's Government adopt this course, that the other Powers will join them and Austria in resisting the ambitious views of Russia. As I asked what Prince

Bismarck would do, his Excellency said that his Highness has been in favour of a separate peace, probably in order not to have to decide between supporting Russian or Austrian interests, but that he has no fear of his giving active support to Russia, as he could not do so without endangering the maintenance of the newly-formed German Empire.

Count Andrassy is not aware to what your Lordship alluded in referring to "a distinction apparently drawn between deliberations which preceded the conclusion of the Treaty of Paris and the Treaty itself," as he has not spoken of such a basis himself, nor read anything respecting it, and I could not give him any information on the subject.

Doc. 774 Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 19.)

(No. 29. Secret.)

My Lord,

Berlin, January 14, 1878.

IN my despatch No. 22, Secret, of the 12th instant, I recounted some of Prince Bismarck's "table talk" to your Lordship, and to-day I have heard of other similar utterances of his, from an equally good authority, which I beg to add to the record of the former ones.

Prince Bismarck, in discussing Count Andrassy, concluded that that statesman had done well for Austria, for he had secured two strings to her bow:—

1. A secret Russian promise of additional provinces and respect of Austrian interests generally, in return for her neutrality, and—

2. An offer of English co-operation to protect Anglo-Austrian interests if Russia should turn traitor and not keep her promise at the eleventh hour.

He thought, however, that Prince Gortchakow would keep his promises to Austria and would respect English interests, because it was the obvious interest of Russia to avoid, after her brilliant successes, complications, and to secure as soon as possible through peaceful agreement the guarantee of the Great Powers for what she has already acquired through the war.

As far as German interests were concerned, he would not be sorry to see England go to war and vanquish Russia, because the moral supremacy, influence, and example of England would be better for Europe than the supremacy, influence, and example of Russia.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

Doc. 775

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(Telegraphic.)

(Secret.)

Foreign Office, January 21, 1878, 7 P.M.

COUNT BEUST told me to-day, in strict confidence, that Count Andrassy had telegraphed to him that the suspicion which Count Beust attributed to Her Majesty's Government, that Russia was trying to divide England and Austria, was not without foundation. At the present moment Russia wishes to induce the Austrian Government to agree with her in principle about the conditions of peace, probably with the idea of representing these conditions to the Porte as having been accepted by Austria. Under present circumstances the Austrian Government will decidedly not entertain these proposals. It is possible that the Russian Government, not having succeeded at Vienna, may make a similar proposal to England. Count Andrassy expected the English Government to act in the same way as the Austrian had done. The manœuvre to divide the two will not succeed, as they both maintain the standpoint that every alteration of the Treaties will only be valid with the sanction of the Treaty Powers.

I stated to Count Beust at once, in reply, that Her Majesty's Government would communicate unreservedly with that of Austria on the conditions of peace as soon as they were informed of them.

Doc. 776

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(Telegraphic.)

(Secret.)

Foreign Office, January 21, 1878, 7:30 P.M.

COUNT BEUST has communicated a telegram from Count Andrassy to the following effect:—

"With reference to your recent conversations with Lord Beaconsfield, I agree with his Lordship that it is high time to arrive at a clear understanding, and that the greatest

openness is necessary. Therefore we must say candidly that the position taken up by England in the Queen's Speech, without at the same time asking Parliament for a money vote, has made an impression detrimental to the weight of England's voice not only in Austria but throughout Europe. Austria being still a member of the alliance of the Three Emperors, and considering her geographical and military position, the fact of our having declared that we would look upon any alteration of the Treaties without the agreement of the Signatory Powers as not valid, and of our having communicated this declaration at St. Petersburg and Constantinople, constitute in themselves a far more active step than all the queries and reserves which England has made and which she could still make. Under these circumstances we could not make an ostensible political alliance acceptable to public opinion in Austria, and a policy which should take such an alliance for its basis would be condemned beforehand.

"The Austrian Government have no doubt that if they eventually take independent action, the Legislatures would grant them the necessary funds for mobilization, but they would not find any support in making a demonstration of going diplomatically hand in hand with England so long as the British Government have not given a visible sign of their determination to protect at least their maritime interests, and so long as they have not by so doing created confidence in their being able to act.

"Your Excellency will communicate the above confidentially, but with perfect openness, to Lord Beaconsfield.

"I do not agree with his Lordship that it would be too late for military action, and I do not think Lord Derby's fear of a mousetrap for the British fleet at all founded in fact. I will send you my reasons in a subsequent telegram."

Doc. 777

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 44. Secret.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 21, 1878.

I HAVE to request your Excellency to ask Count Andrassy if the Austrian Government would be willing to join in an identic note to the Russian Government to the following effect:—

"The continued occupation by foreign troops of Bulgaria, or of any part of the shores of the Bosphorus, the Sea of Marmora, and Dardanelles, or any alteration of the rules affecting the navigation thereof, to be declared inadmissible without the consent of Austria and England."

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Doc. 778

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 23.)

(No. 43.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, January 10, 1878.

THE Sultan, who had assembled his Ministers early this morning at the Palace, sent Saïd Pasha to me with a communication from himself, which had been agreed to in Council. As the matter was of so grave a nature, and it was of the utmost importance that I should be able to report to your Lordship with the greatest accuracy His Majesty's very words, I begged Saïd Pasha to dictate them to me, and after I had taken them down I read over to his Excellency what I had written. Saïd Pasha having approved of it, I telegraphed it to your Lordship. It was to this effect: that the Russian forces on this side of the Balkans, said to amount to nearly 200,000 men, were advancing upon Adrianople, and that it was feared that the city could not be defended against such overwhelming numbers. If it fell into the hands of the Russians they would at once advance upon Constantinople. Should they attempt to take possession of the capital, the Turkish Empire itself would be in peril, and the consequences could not be foreseen. To prevent the catastrophe which would probably be the result, the Sultan appeals for the last time to Her Majesty's Government to obtain peace for him from Russia on the most favourable terms that she can be induced to give, accepting for basis the Treaty of Paris. Should Her Majesty's Government find themselves unable to take any further steps to secure an immediate peace, or should they be under the necessity of declining to do so, the Sultan will, in such case, be under the absolute necessity, as the safety of his Empire is at stake, to address himself at once directly to the Emperor of Russia, and will be compelled to accept such terms as he may think fit to impose upon Turkey. No responsibility will then rest upon His Majesty for the consequences of this direct understanding with Russia.

I was further requested by the Sultan to represent to Her Majesty's Government that it was absolutely necessary that an immediate and final answer should be returned by them to this communication, as there was no time to be lost.

I gave Saïd Pasha, at his Excellency's request, a memorandum of what I had telegraphed to your Lordship to be shown to the Sultan and his Ministers. Server Pasha, whom I saw later in the day, stated that it was in strict conformity with the message which His Majesty, with the concurrence of the Council, had sent to me.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Doc. 779 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 23.)
(Telegraphic.)
(Secret.)

Vienna, January 22, 1878.

COUNT ANDRASSY is unwilling to address to Russia the identic note proposed by Her Majesty's Government, but not on the grounds on which I believed last night he would object to it. He declines to adopt it, as it would, in his opinion, weaken position which the two Governments have already taken by their declarations at St. Petersburg and Constantinople, and as it would not only separate England and Austria from the other Guaranteeing Powers, but would admit that the occupation by Russian troops of Bulgaria, which he considers to be absolutely inadmissible, might be permitted with consent of England and Austria. He says that the difference between him and Her Majesty's Government is that he has declared clearly what interests he intends to protect, and if a mobilization is necessary the order will be given for it before the Legislature is asked to sanction the expenditure to be incurred; but Her Majesty's Government appear unwilling to take any responsibility on themselves, and the action of England may depend on an adverse vote of the House of Commons: and, therefore, until Her Majesty's Government (have?) taken some active and material measure proving that the country will support them in protecting momentous interests against pretensions of Russia, he cannot commit himself before his country to the adoption of any course in concert with England for the support of their common interests, though he has no intention of abandoning those of Austria. But, as he has already said, he can take no middle course, and he cannot menace Russia without mobilizing, and mobilization will not only mean war, but put the country from the first day to enormous expenses. When it is necessary, however, he will easily find the financial means required for it, and Austria has no idea of accepting foreign subsidies.

He repeated, on my endeavours to ascertain what he expected England to do, that she should, for the protection of her own interests in Constantinople, send her fleet there, and she should ask a credit for the expenses of the measures she may have to adopt to cause her voice to be heard by Russia.

If she does this, he said, it will be seen that she is in earnest, and those who are disposed to act with her for the protection of their own interests or of the interests which they may have in common, will know that they will find in her an ally to be depended on, and whose voice will be respected by Russia.

I said that he seemed to doubt that Her Majesty's Government were in earnest, and that they had finally decided on supporting English interests by material measures (?); but if Her Majesty's Government were influenced by what ill-disposed persons said, they might equally doubt that Austria had taken an irrevocable decision on the subject, and, indeed, the public generally in England believed that the three Emperors were in one camp. To this he answered that from the mission of General Somoroukoff to the present day, he had shown that he had the courage of his own opinions (?), and was well-prepared to act upon them. He did not, however, wish war, or that the action of England should lead to it, and he considered that the day on which Her Majesty's Government ordered the fleet to Constantinople, the peace of the East of Europe would be decided, as Russia would never accept war in which she would have to meet Austria and England. He took great exception to the epithet (of anxious?) applied to him by the Prime Minister.

Doc. 780
(No. 51. Secret.)

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 24, 1878.

I TRANSMIT to your Excellency herewith, for your information, the accompanying copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Berlin,* reporting that he has been confidentially informed that Count Andrassy and Prince Bismarck have agreed to Prince Gortchakow's wish for a European Conference if a satisfactory agreement cannot be arrived at between the Powers by any other means.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 781

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 52. Most Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 24, 1878.

THE Austrian Ambassador called upon me this afternoon and read to me confidentially the telegram of which I inclose herewith a Memorandum, commenting upon an observation which Count Beust had reported me to have made as to a joint discussion by Austria and England of the Russian conditions of peace.

I told Count Beust that I had never intended to suggest a discussion or formal expression of opinion by Austria and England on the terms of peace before they had been communicated to the Porte, because I understood that they had in fact already been or were at least on the point of being so communicated to the Turkish Plenipotentiaries. They would, however, I apprehended, come before us eventually in one of three ways:—

Either the Porte would reject the terms offered, and would appeal to the Powers in justification of that course;

Or the terms would be accepted, and brought to our knowledge in that shape;

Or, thirdly, the Porte might, on learning their nature, address itself to the other Powers for their opinion.

I asked Count Beust to give this explanation to Count Andrassy, and I remarked that his Excellency had not expressed any opinion as to the course which it would be desirable for Austria and England to follow in the event of our receiving a request from the Porte for advice on the conditions offered by Russia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Doc. 782 *Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 27.)*
(Telegraphic.)
(Secret.)

Vienna, January 27, 1878.

I ARRIVED yesterday and saw Count Andrassy last night. He had only just received from M. Novikow the Russian conditions, which he telegraphed *in extenso* to Count Beust. The principal difference between them and those communicated to your Lordship by Count Schouvaloff consists in a statement that the arrangement respecting the passage of the Straits is to be come to between the Emperor and the Sultan directly, and in a declaration that when the conditions are accepted Turkish Plenipotentiaries should be sent to Odessa or Sebastopol to convert them into preliminaries of peace, General Ignatiew having already proceeded there.

He appears perfectly resolved to refuse to recognize any terms of peace arranged without the participation of the Powers, and declares that Powers must not be simply invited to endorse what had been settled between the Porte and Russia, but must be *bonâ fide* consulted upon every question affecting European Treaties, which cannot be altered without their consent.

I pressed him very hard to enable Her Majesty's Government to inform Parliament in asking for vote of credit that they were acting in concert with Austria, and he said he

would tell me to-day how far he would consent to their going in intimating that an understanding or agreement existed between the two Governments.

He considers that in asking for vote of credit it should be made clear that it was not an (?) actual hostility to Russia, but only a means of taking precautionary measures at a moment's notice, if the protection of British interests makes it necessary; but he is most anxious to know whether, if Russia afterwards persists in acting independently of the European Powers, he can count upon the active assistance of England to enforce our mutual rights. He is convinced that this necessity will not arise, but says it is indispensable that Austria and England should be agreed as to what they will do in case it should arise.

As far as it is possible to judge from a first interview, I should say that Count Andrassy is perfectly resolved, if supported by Her Majesty's Government, to stand up for the rights of Europe to be consulted in all matters affecting the Treaties, first by protest and afterwards by arms, if (which he does not believe) this should become necessary.

Count Andrassy informed M. de Novikow two days ago that he is determined, even if standing alone, not to tolerate a Russian occupation south of the Danube after peace is signed.

Doc. 783 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 27.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, January 27, 1878.

COUNT ANDRASSY considers that in asking Parliament for the vote Her Majesty's Government could make a statement somewhat to the following effect:—

"With reference to the arrangements made by the Russian and Turkish Delegates at Kyzanlik, Her Majesty's Government declare that, while recognizing their validity as between Russia and Turkey, in so far as they are calculated to modify European Treaties and to affect general and British interests they are unable to recognize in them any validity unless they are made the subject of a formal agreement among Parties to the Treaty of Paris.

"Her Majesty's Government hope that this view of the case, which is entirely based upon the Treaties, and especially upon the Treaty of London of 1871, will receive assent of the other Powers.

"As regards Austria, the repeated declarations of that Power give us the conviction that she entirely shares the views of Her Majesty's Government."

Doc. 784 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 27.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, January 27, 1878.

REVERTING to first Russian conditions respecting limits to be assigned to Bulgaria, Count Andrassy asked me whether the preliminary Conferences at Constantinople were correctly represented as having advocated the formation of a Bulgaria extending south of the Balkans.

I said that it was altogether incorrect (?). General Ignatiev had at first strongly advocated the erection of a large Bulgarian province, which had been firmly resisted by Lord Salisbury, and the preliminary Conference adopted the principle of dividing the districts in which the reforms were to be introduced into two separate provinces.

This, Count Andrassy said, was a totally different thing, and he seemed to attach much importance to what he regards as an attempt on the part of Russia to make it appear that the creation of a Bulgarian province extending beyond the Balkans had already been approved by Europe.

Doc. 785

Extract from the "Agence Russe."

LES PRÉTENTIONS DE L'ANGLETERRE.—LE "Journal (Français) de St. Pétersbourg" caractérise, comme nous le faisons nous-mêmes, ces prétentions:—

"Le Cabinet de Londres s'est fait le porte-voix du Gouvernement Ottoman pour demander des négociations de paix et d'armistice. La Russie y a aussitôt consenti, pourvu que la Turquie envoyât ses Plénipotentiaires aux deux quartiers-généraux, qui lui feraient

connaître les conditions auxquelles une suspension d'hostilités pouvait avoir lieu. La première condition devait naturellement être l'acceptation des bases préliminaires de la paix. Nous avons déjà exposé à satiété qu'un armistice sans bases de paix ne pouvait être qu'un moyen d'augmenter les forces de l'ennemi et de prolonger la guerre.

"On a vu, en d'autres temps, des suspensions d'hostilités stipulées entre les armées qui, se sentant l'une et l'autre épuisées par les efforts déjà faits ou arrêtées par les rigueurs de la saison, prenait ce qu'on appelait les quartiers d'hiver, sauf à recourir de nouveau à la fortune des armes dès que les circonstances le permettaient. De nos jours, et surtout dans une guerre comme celle-ci, pareil arrangement n'est plus concevable, alors surtout que l'une des deux armées, bravant tous les obstacles, est en pleine marche victorieuse sur la capitale de l'ennemi, et que celui-ci n'a presque plus rien à lui opposer. Il est encore impossible dans une guerre qui n'a point pour but une conquête, mais la cessation d'un état de choses auquel on ne saurait laisser le temps de raffermir sans manquer à la mission essentielle qui domine l'entreprise humanitaire de la Russie. Même en laissant à l'écart les considérations militaires qui n'admettent pas qu'on donne à l'ennemi le temps de se réconforter pour une nouvelle lutte, un armistice sans bases de paix arrêtées serait injustifiable, parce qu'il laisserait à la merci des troupes Turques des contrées et des populations dont le sort, déjà si déplorable en temps de paix, avait précisément motivé la guerre.

"On comprend donc qu'à tous ces points de vue—sans parler de ceux parfaitement légitimes de l'armée et des finances Russes—l'armistice ne pouvait être que la conséquence d'une entente entre les belligérants sur les conditions de la paix. Or, actuellement, le Cabinet de Londres déclare ne vouloir admettre qu'une paix négociée avec la participation de l'Europe.

"Qu'en résulte-t-il? C'est que même si la Porte souscrivait aujourd'hui aux conditions qui pourraient aboutir à l'armistice en acceptant les bases de la paix, la Russie se trouverait devant la conviction que ces bases n'auraient aucune valeur, l'assentiment de la Turquie n'engageant à rien, puisque l'Europe pourrait le réduire à néant. Cette situation a encore été accentuée par la déclaration du Gouvernement Britannique, qu'il attendait seulement de connaître les conditions de la Russie pour formuler sa demande de subsider en vue des armements. Ainsi donc, si la tentative actuelle devait échouer, ce serait encore une fois l'attitude de l'Angleterre qui aurait rendu l'armistice et la paix impossibles et précipité l'Orient vers une crise fatale. Loin de nous la pensée que ce soit là ce qu'on aura voulu à Londres. Mais l'incontestable logique de notre raisonnement n'échappera à aucun homme sincère et impartial. C'est à l'Europe de juger, et il est nécessaire que devant la conscience publique et le tribunal d'histoire chacun porte les responsabilités qui lui incombent."

Doc. 786 Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 28.)

(No. 19. Very Confidential.)

My Lord,

Vienna, January 13, 1878.

I HAVE had an interview to-day with Count Andrassy, at which I acquainted his Excellency with the substance of your Lordship's recent telegraphic correspondence with Lord Augustus Loftus on the subject of the armistice.

His Excellency appeared to think that the Russian Government have wished to delay the commencement of the negotiations, with a view to their obtaining meanwhile further military successes, but he does not believe that their army will be able to reach Constantinople before a settlement is effected.

He stated to me, in strict confidence, that some days previously he had caused an intimation to be made confidentially to Prince Gortchakow that the Austro-Hungarian Government would not agree to the conclusion of a separate peace between Russia and Turkey, and that they must insist upon the peace being a European one. He said he was anxious, therefore, that the Porte should lose no time in inducing the Russians to state the conditions on which they are willing to make peace, and that if they are reasonable he has no objection to its accepting them, subject to the assent of Europe.

It may be presumed, however, that they will not be such as the Porte will be disposed to accept; and on its then applying for the interference of England and Austria and the other European Powers, they will be in a position to state what they can assent to and what they will resist; and, he added, Austria will then be found ready to maintain what she has said from the first to Russia, and what she has stated in writing to Her Majesty's Government.

His Excellency seemed to be under some apprehension lest public opinion in England, as exhibited at meetings in favour of the maintenance of peace, might not have an unfavourable influence on the eventual decision of Her Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Doc. 787 Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 31.)

(No. 3.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, January 31, 1878.

I COMMUNICATED to Count Andrassy your Lordship's Memorandum to Count Schouvaloff respecting advance of Russian troops towards Constantinople, and asked him what measures the Austrian Government would be prepared to adopt if an attack upon the capital seemed imminent.

He said that a Russian entry into Constantinople was not one of the points on which the two Governments had agreed to support each other, and that although he shared the objections to it of Her Majesty's Government, it would be necessary for England to be "one length" in advance of Austria in any steps to be taken.

The case would be reversed in regard to a proposed Russian occupation of Bulgaria after peace, about which also there is no agreement between our two Governments, but which Austria must oppose even if not supported by us.

My impression is that, if it suited Her Majesty's Government to add these two points to others already agreed upon, Count Andrassy would probably be ready to do so, and the support of Austria would thus be secured for any measures we might adopt in regard to Constantinople.

Doc. 788

ABSTRACT

OF

SECRET AND CONFIDENTIAL CORRESPONDENCE ON THE
EASTERN QUESTION.

PART I.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT.

ON the 24th April, 1877, the Russians declared war, and on the same day the Russian troops entered Roumania and crossed the Turkish frontier in Asia.

On the 6th May Lord Derby addressed a despatch* to Count Schouvaloff stating that Her Majesty's Government were determined to carry impartially into effect the policy of neutrality so long as Turkish interests alone were involved; but in view of the war spreading and interests being imperilled which they are equally bound and determined to defend, Lord Derby defined as follows what the most prominent of these interests are:—

"Foremost among them is the necessity of keeping open, uninjured and uninterrupted, the communication between Europe and the East by the Suez Canal. An attempt to blockade or otherwise to interfere with the Canal or its approaches would be regarded by them as a menace to India, and as a grave injury to the commerce of the world. On both these grounds any such step—which they hope and fully believe there is no intention on the part of either belligerent to take—would be inconsistent with the maintenance by them of an attitude of passive neutrality.

"The mercantile and financial interests of European nations are also so largely involved in Egypt that an attack on that country, or its occupation, even temporary, for purposes of war, could scarcely be regarded with unconcern by the neutral Powers, certainly not by England.

"The vast importance of Constantinople, whether in a military, a political, or a commercial point of view, is too well understood to require explanation. It is, therefore, scarcely necessary to point out that Her Majesty's Government are not prepared to witness with indifference the passing into other hands than those of its present possessors, of a capital holding so peculiar and commanding a position.

"The existing arrangements, made under European sanction, which regulate the navigation of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles, appear to them wise and salutary, and there would be, in their judgment, serious objections to their alteration in any material particular.

"Her Majesty's Government have thought it right thus frankly to indicate their views. The course of events might show that there were still other interests, as, for instance, on the Persian Gulf, which it would be their duty to protect; but they do not doubt that they will have sufficiently pointed out to your Excellency the limits within which they hope that the war may be confined, or, at all events, those within which they themselves would be prepared, so far as present circumstances allow of an opinion being formed, to maintain a policy of abstention and neutrality."

On the 8th June Count Schouvaloff communicated Prince Gortchakow's reply.* He gave the following assurances as to British interests:—

"Le Cabinet Impérial ne veut ni bloquer, ni interrompre, ni menacer en rien, la navigation du Canal de Suez. Il le considère comme une œuvre internationale, intéressant le commerce du monde, et qui doit rester hors de toute atteinte.

* This despatch has been laid before Parliament. ("Russia, No. 2, 1877.")

"L'Égypte fait partie de l'Empire Ottoman, et ses contingents figurent dans l'armée Turque. La Russie pourrait donc se considérer comme en guerre avec elle. Toutefois, le Cabinet Impérial ne méconnaît ni les intérêts Européens engagés dans ce pays, ni ceux de l'Angleterre en particulier. Il ne fera pas entrer l'Égypte dans le rayon de ses opérations militaires.

"Pour ce qui concerne Constantinople, sans pouvoir préjuger la marche ni l'issue de la guerre, le Cabinet Impérial répète qu'une acquisition de cette capitale est exclue des vues de sa Majesté l'Empereur. Il reconnaît qu'en tous cas le sort de Constantinople est une question d'intérêt commun, qui ne peut être réglée que par une entente générale, et que si la possession de cette ville devait être mise en question elle ne saurait appartenir à aucune des Puissances de l'Europe.

"Quant aux Détroits, quoique les deux rives appartiennent au même Souverain, ils forment le débouché exclusif de deux vastes mers où tout le monde a des intérêts. Il importe donc à la paix et à l'équilibre général que cette question soit réglée d'un commun accord sur des bases équitables et efficacement garanties.

"Lord Derby a fait allusion à d'autres intérêts Britanniques pouvant être affectés par l'extension éventuelle de la guerre, comme le Golfe Persique et la route des Indes. Le Cabinet Impérial déclare qu'il n'étendra pas la guerre au delà de ce qu'exige le but hautement et clairement proclamé pour lequel Sa Majesté l'Empereur a été obligé de prendre les armes. Il aura égard aux intérêts Britanniques mentionnés par Lord Derby, tant que l'Angleterre restera dans la neutralité."

Prince Gortchakow went on to ask that the British Government should, on its side, consider the special interests of Russia in the war.

These were the improvement of the position of the Christians and the prevention of the recurrence of crises disastrous to the peaceful development of Russia. (No. 13, p. 9.)

After communicating Prince Gortchakow's note, Count Schouvaloff had a confidential conversation with Lord Derby. He stated that Russia could not bind herself not to occupy Constantinople temporarily if the exigencies of the war required it.

The existing arrangements respecting the Straits could only be revised by common accord, but Russia would not engage not to represent to Europe the necessity of a revision of them.

Russia has no interest in disturbing England in India, or, consequently, in her communications.

Count Schouvaloff was authorized to give the most categorical assurances on this subject; but, in that case, Russia had a right to expect that England would undertake no hostile action against her.

He then proceeded to define the essential object of the war.

What Russia required was to put an end to the permanent crises in the East: first, by establishing her military superiority; secondly, by putting the Christians, and especially those of Bulgaria, into a position effectually guaranteed against the abuses of Turkish administration.

What England requires is the maintenance, in principle, of the Ottoman Empire, and the inviolability of Constantinople and the Straits. These views are not irreconcilable.

War once begun, Russia could not accept any restriction on her operations, which must be guided by military necessities; but the results of the war might be restricted within certain limits.

Count Schouvaloff proceeded to state that Russia could give an assurance that if the neutrality of the Powers was maintained, and the Porte asked for peace before the Russian armies crossed the Balkans, the Emperor would consent not to pass that line.

The conditions of peace would in that case be the following:—

"La Bulgarie jusqu'aux Balkans serait érigée en province vassale autonome sous la garantie de l'Europe.

"Les troupes et les fonctionnaires Turcs en seraient éloignés, les forteresses désarmées et rasées.

"Le 'self-government' y serait établi avec l'appui d'une milice nationale à organiser le plus tôt possible.

"Les Puissances s'accorderaient pour assurer à la partie de Bulgarie au sud des Balkans, ainsi qu'aux provinces Chrétiennes de la Turquie, les meilleures garanties possibles d'une administration régulière.

"Le Monténégro et la Serbie recevraient une augmentation de territoire qui sera déterminée en commun.

"La Bosnie et l'Herzégovine seraient dotées des institutions jugées d'un commun accord compatible avec leur état intérieur et propres à y assurer une bonne administration indigène.

"La situation limitrophe de ces deux provinces avec l'Autriche-Hongrie, donne à cette dernière une voix prépondérante dans leur organisation future.

"La Serbie, comme la Bulgarie, resteraient placées sous la suzeraineté du Sultan; les rapports du suzerain et des vassaux seront définis de manière à prévenir les conflits.

"Pour ce qui est de la Roumanie, qui vient de proclamer son indépendance, l'Empereur est d'avis que c'est une question qui ne peut être réglée que par une entente générale.

"Si ces conditions sont acceptées, les Cabinets pourraient exercer une pression collective sur la Porte, en l'avertissant, qu'en cas de refus, elle serait abandonnée aux conséquences de la guerre.

"Si la Porte demandait la paix et acceptait les conditions énumérées plus haut avant que nos armées n'aient franchi la ligne des Balkans, la Russie accepterait la paix, mais se réserve le droit de stipuler quelques avantages particuliers comme compensation des charges de la guerre.

"Ces avantages ne dépasseraient pas la restitution de la partie de la Bessarabie cédée en 1856 jusqu'au bras septentrional du Danube (c'est-à-dire, le delta des bouches de ce fleuve reste exclu), et la cession de Batoum avec un territoire adjacent.

"En pareil cas, la Roumanie pourrait d'un commun accord être dédommagée, soit par la proclamation de son indépendance, soit si elle restait vassale par une partie de la Dobroudja.

"Si l'Autriche-Hongrie réclamait de son côté une compensation, soit pour les acquisitions faites par la Russie, soit comme gage de sécurité contre les remaniements ci-dessus mentionnés au profit des Principautés Chrétiennes de la presqu'île des Balkans, la Russie ne s'opposerait pas à ce qu'elle cherche ces compensations en Bosnie et en partie en Herzégovine.

"Telles sont les bases auxquelles Sa Majesté l'Empereur donnerait son assentiment en vue d'établir l'entente avec l'Angleterre et l'Europe et d'arriver à une prompte paix."

Count Schouvaloff resumed the views of the Russian Government thus —

If the Porte were to ask for peace, and accepted the above conditions before the Russian armies crossed the Balkans, the Emperor would consent not to push operations of war any further. If the Turkish Government refused, Russia must pursue the war until the Porte is forced to agree to peace. In that case the conditions of the Imperial Cabinet might be different.

In stating frankly the aim of the Emperor, beyond which he will not go as long as the war is maintained on the north of the Balkans, His Majesty offers the means of localising the war and preventing the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, but the Emperor would wish to know if within the limits thus stated he can count upon the neutrality of England, a neutrality which would exclude even a temporary occupation of Constantinople or of the Straits by England.

In making the above communication Count Schouvaloff stipulated that these confidential proposals should not be made public without his first having an opportunity of verifying the accuracy of any statements attributed to him, and that in the event of Her Majesty's Government declining to enter on an exchange of ideas the terms proposed should not be communicated to the Porte. (No. 14, p. 11).

In a conversation with Lord A. Loftus on the 31st May, Prince Gortchakow stated that he regarded the independence of Roumania as a *fait accompli, de facto*, but not *de jure*. It was a question which could only be treated later in conjunction with the European Powers.

In regard to Servia Prince Gortchakow said that Prince Milan and the Servian Government had expressed their readiness to act according to the wish of the Emperor, and that it had been signified to them that the Emperor's wish was that they should remain perfectly passive. (No. 17, p. 14.)

In reply to an inquiry from Lord Derby, Count Schouvaloff stated, on the 11th June, that he had no doubt of the assent of Austria to the creation of an autonomic State in Bulgaria, north of the Balkans, as she would be well paid for giving it; and he remarked that the Austrian Government, without incurring any risks or making any sacrifices, would gain greater territorial advantages than Russia. The terms of peace had been communicated confidentially to Count Andrassy and Prince Bismarck, and Prince Gortchakow was sure that nothing was to be apprehended from the opposition of any Continental Power. (No. 19, p. 15.)

The Russian terms of peace were telegraphed to Mr. Layard on the 12th June, and he was asked if he thought there was any probability of the Porte consenting to them. If not, any attempt at mediation in the present state of affairs seemed hopeless. (No. 24, p. 18.)

Mr. Layard replied that he was convinced that Turkey would not accept the terms unless utterly prostrate, and that it would be dangerous even to suggest them, and might result in gravely compromising the interests of England. He earnestly advised that they should not be mentioned to the Porte (No. 27, p. 19). The views of Mr. Layard as to the terms of peace are stated in No. 50, p. 29, and No. 58, p. 36. Mr. Layard was informed that Her Majesty's Government had no intention of instructing him to propose the conditions of peace to the Porte or to support them. (No. 53, p. 31.)

On the 14th June Count Schouvaloff stated that Prince Gortchakow had decided, in consequence of information on the spot, that Bulgaria could not be divided into two provinces, as such an arrangement would exclude from the autonomous institutions the most industrious and intelligent part of the population. Lord Derby

observed in reply that in his personal opinion the Turks were not likely to have accepted the terms as first proposed, except under pressure of absolute necessity, and that this important modification made acceptance still more improbable. (No. 28, p. 19.)

On the 18th June Count Schouvaloff asked confidentially if Her Majesty's Government were prepared to express any opinion in regard to the Russian terms of peace. Lord Derby said that he did not understand them to have been communicated with a view to the expression of the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, and he observed that it would be better under the circumstances that he should not, unless expressly instructed to do so, ask for an official reply to his communication. (No. 47, p. 27.)

Lord A. Loftus' views of the Russian conditions of peace are given in No. 54, p. 31, and No. 55, p. 32.

On the 17th July Lord Derby communicated the following Memorandum to Count Schouvaloff:—

“(Secret and Confidential.)

“The Cabinet are deeply impressed with the gravity of the present crisis, and the danger to the general peace which may ensue unless some understanding is arrived at. They have received with sincere satisfaction the assurance given by the Emperor of Russia that, as far as concerns Constantinople, the acquisition of that capital is excluded from His Majesty's views. But the assurance does not wholly meet the exigencies of the moment, and they have therefore instructed Lord Derby to tell the Russian Ambassador, confidentially and secretly, that they regard the occupation of Constantinople by Russian troops, even though temporary in duration, and dictated by military requirements, as most inexpedient in the interest of the good relations between the two countries. They therefore express their earnest hope that this step is not contemplated by the Russian Government. Should it unfortunately appear that the occupation is likely to take place, they hold themselves free to adopt any measure which, in their judgment, may be required for the protection of British interests.

“The Cabinet wish it at the same time to be understood that they will gladly avail themselves of any opportunity that may offer to assist in the restoration of peace on such conditions as may be consistent with the general interests of Europe and with the honour of the Russian Government.

“This communication is strictly confidential, and the Cabinet are convinced that it will be received by the Russian Government in the spirit in which it is intended—not as a menace, but as a friendly warning of danger threatening both Governments, which it is most desirable they should avoid.” (No. 88, p. 52.)

In a confidential conversation on the 21st, Count Schouvaloff stated, with reference to the Memorandum given to him on the 17th, as his personal opinion only, that it was difficult to give a pledge not to march on Constantinople, as if the Turks proved obstinate, peace could only be obtained by that means, or by a prolonged occupation of the country. The Turkish army remaining unbroken, it would be difficult to come to terms until some more decided results had been obtained. He thought that mediation would not be acceptable at that time, but that later on Austria might mediate. (No. 93, p. 54.)

On the 27th July the following telegram was received from Colonel Wellesley, dated from the Imperial head-quarters at Bjela, July 20:—

“I am authorized by the Emperor to state that, notwithstanding recent successes, and though, of course, His Majesty cannot suspend military operations, he is of the same opinions, and ready to treat for peace if the Sultan will make suitable propositions.” (No. 101, p. 57.)

This telegram was repeated to Mr. Layard, who enquired on the 28th July whether he should sound the Sultan on the subject of it.

The following reply was telegraphed to him on the same day:—

“You are authorized to sound the Sultan as to possible terms of peace. Her Majesty's Government are not disposed to take the initiative in proposing conditions, but the Sultan may rely on their friendly offices with a view to obtain the most favourable terms possible under the circumstances, if he is disposed to open negotiations.” (No. 106, p. 58.)

Mr. Layard having reported that in case of the capture of Adrianople which seemed imminent, the Sultan would perhaps retire to Broussa, and that the Christian population of Constantinople would then be in great danger, he was further informed by telegraph (July 28) that Her Majesty's Government would be ready, on the invitation of the Sultan, to send the fleet to Constantinople to provide for the maintenance of order and the safety of the European population. With a view to the safety of the fleet, Mr. Layard was to make enquiries respecting the defences of the Dardanelles, and the means of preventing their becoming a danger to the fleet by falling into hostile hands. (No. 105, p. 58.)

The following Memorandum was at the same time (July 28), communicated to Count Schouvaloff:—

"Her Majesty's Government receive with much satisfaction the statement which His Majesty the Emperor has authorized Colonel Wellesley to make, that he is ready to treat for peace if the Sultan will make suitable propositions.

"Her Majesty's Government will be ready to use their influence, in concert with the other Powers, to induce the Porte to terminate the present disastrous war by acceding to such terms of peace as shall be at once honourable to Russia, and yet such as the Sultan can accept.

"Her Majesty's Government look with much anxiety at the state of things in Constantinople, and the prospect of the disorder and bloodshed, and even anarchy, which may occur there as the Russian forces draw nearer to the capital. The crisis which may at any moment arrive in Constantinople may be such as Her Majesty's Government could not overlook while they had the means of mitigating its horrors. Her Majesty's Government are fully determined (unless it should be necessary for the preservation of interests which they have already stated they are bound to maintain) not to depart from the line of neutrality which they have declared their intention to observe; but they do not consider that they would be departing from this neutrality, and they think that Russia will not consider that they are so doing, if they should find themselves compelled to direct their fleet to proceed to Constantinople, and thus afford protection to the European population against internal disturbance.

"It must be clearly understood that no decision in favour of such a proceeding has been taken by Her Majesty's Government, but they are anxious that, in the event of its becoming necessary, no misunderstanding should arise as to their intentions, and that the Government of Russia, with which it is their sincere desire to remain on friendly terms, should not be taken by surprise." (No. 108, p. 59.)

On the 29th Mr. Layard telegraphed that it was difficult to obtain correct information as to the defences of the Dardanelles, owing to the suspicions of the intentions of England entertained by the Porte. (No. 109, p. 59.)

On the 31st he was authorized by telegraph to give whatever assurances might be necessary to restore confidence as to the motives of Her Majesty's Government, and to state that all rumours of English designs affecting the integrity of the Turkish Empire are absolutely unfounded. Her Majesty's Government did not propose to depart from their policy of neutrality, but in the event of the danger of disturbances and bloodshed at Constantinople becoming imminent they would be willing if invited to send up the fleet for the purpose of giving protection to the European population and assisting in the maintenance of order. Mr. Layard was authorized to sound the Sultan as to this. (No. 122, p. 67.)

The news of Turkish successes now reached Constantinople, and the panic which had prevailed there subsided. Mr. Layard reported that there was no danger of disturbance or bloodshed unless the Sultan and his Government left, which they would not do except on a very great emergency. Under these circumstances he thought it better not to say anything about the fleet going to Constantinople. (No. 123, p. 68.) And on the 2nd August he reported that "recent successes in Bulgaria and Roumania have made the Turkish Ministers so confident of being able to repulse Russians, that I have reason to believe that the Sultan could not at this time either propose or listen to conditions of peace. I have informed him secretly that should there be a favourable opportunity of opening negotiations for peace, he may rely on friendly offices of Her Majesty's Government. I do not think that anything more can be done at present." (No. 125, p. 68.)

The views with regard to negotiations for peace expressed by Prince Gortchakow on the 15th July and by General Ignatieff on the 20th and 23rd July, are reported in the following extracts from despatches received on the 30th from Colonel Wellesley:—

"With regard to Constantinople, Prince Gortchakow repeated that neither he nor the Emperor would ever hear of its remaining in Russian hands; but it was evident that he foresees the possibility, if not the probability, of the temporary occupation of that capital by Russian troops. 'The question of an occupation of Constantinople by Russia,' said his Highness, 'depends very much upon England. When we arrive at Adrianople, England will have an opportunity of rendering immense services (late if you will) in the interests of peace; but as long as the British fleet is in Besika Bay, so long will the Turks hope for British assistance.' (No. 118, p. 65.)

"General Ignatieff begged me to impress on Her Majesty's Government the fact that if European complications are to be avoided, the moment has arrived for England to induce the Porte to make overtures of peace—overtures which if couched in suitable language, his Excellency assured me the Emperor would be glad to entertain.

"Again and again did General Ignatieff request me to telegraph in this sense to your Lordship."

Colonel Wellesley having replied that he could not telegraph without the Emperor's authority, General Ignatieff went to His Majesty's tent, and in about twenty minutes returned and authorized Colonel Wellesley, "in the Emperor's name," to send his telegram of July 20.

"Only yesterday General Ignatiew begged me again to impress on your Lordship that the time had arrived when England should bring her influence to bear on the Porte in favour of peace, and added that the dream of the Grand Duke Nicholas, and of those who surround him, is 'de faire célébrer la messe dans l'Eglise de Sainte Sophie.'" (No. 119, p. 66.)

Colonel Wellesley left the Russian head-quarters for London on the 30th July, nominally with the view of explaining to Her Majesty's Government the true state of the case with regard to the alleged Russian atrocities. Before leaving, the Emperor made the observations recorded in the following Memorandum, which was submitted to and approved by His Majesty :—

"His Majesty the Emperor, in consequence of the false reports current in England respecting alleged Russian atrocities, thought it might be useful for me to report personally to Her Majesty's Government the true state of affairs.

"In an interview which I had before my departure, His Majesty was pleased to make the following remarks to me, and at the same time authorized me to communicate them to my Government.

"His Majesty repeated what he had already said to Lord A. Loftus at Livadia, and to myself at Simnitz.

"The object of the present war was solely the amelioration of the condition of the Christian population of Turkey.

"The conditions of peace required by the Emperor are those lately communicated to Lord Derby by Count Schouvaloff, and will remain the same as long as England maintains her position of neutrality ; if, however, England abandons that position, matters will have entered a new phase.

"His Majesty has no ideas of annexation beyond that perhaps of the territory Russia lost in 1856, and perhaps that of a certain portion of Asia Minor.

"The Emperor will not occupy Constantinople for the sake of military honour, but only if such a step is rendered necessary by the march of events.

"His Majesty is ready to enter into negotiations for peace if suitable propositions are made by the Sultan ; but mediation in favour of Turkey could not be entertained.

"Europe will be invited to a Conference for the final settlement of the conditions of peace.

"The Emperor has not the slightest wish or intention in any way to menace the interests of England either with regard to Constantinople, Egypt, the Suez Canal, or India.

"With respect to India His Majesty not only considers it impossible to do so, but an act of folly if practicable.

"His Majesty assured me that the Triple Alliance was formed for the preservation of peace, and without any idea of aggression, or of offence to England, with which country His Majesty has every desire to remain on friendly terms.

"A temporary occupation of Bulgaria will be necessary.

"His Majesty has never entertained hostile feelings towards England, nor has he desired to give her offence ; but if one is determined to "chercher midi à quatorze heures," it is easy to take offence at anything.

"The Emperor fears that the present policy of England only tends to encourage the Turks, and consequently to prolong the war, and considers that if English influence were brought to bear on the Porte, the Sultan would be ready to come to terms, and thus a war regretted and felt by all Europe would be brought to a speedy conclusion. (No. 131, p. 70.)

"*Biela, Bulgaria, July 17, 1877.*"

The following Memorandum, embodying the reply of Her Majesty's Government to the above communication, was given to Colonel Wellesley to be delivered to the Emperor :—

"(Confidential)

"Her Majesty's Government have considered the communication brought by Colonel Wellesley from the Emperor of Russia with all the attention which its importance deserves.

"They have received with satisfaction the statement made by His Majesty as to the object of the war in which he is engaged, his disclaimer of any extensive ideas of annexation, and his readiness to enter into negotiations for peace. They are grateful for the assurance which he has given of his intention to respect the interests of England.

"It is the earnest desire of Her Majesty's Government to contribute to the re-establishment of peace, and in the meanwhile they have no intention of departing from that attitude of strict, though conditional, neutrality which they have hitherto observed. They would gladly use whatever influence they possess at Constantinople to encourage a pacific disposition on the part of the Sultan and his advisers. They cannot, however, admit that, as appears to be supposed by the Emperor, "the present policy of England tends to encourage the Turks, and consequently to prolong the war." They fear that the influence which they are enabled to exercise on the counsels of the Porte is far less than His Imperial Majesty seems disposed to ascribe to them. So long as the Porte thought fit to expect the military support of England it was natural that English advice should be sought with eagerness and received with deference. But under the contrary circumstances that now prevail at Constantinople, the position of the English Government in Turkish opinion is no longer that of protectors who must be conciliated at any cost, but of neutrals, from whom neither assistance nor hostility is to be anticipated. Further, it does not appear to Her Majesty's Government that the present juncture is one which offers a favourable opening for the commencement of negotiations. The military events which have occurred

since the date of the communication made by the Emperor to Colonel Wellesley will have necessarily indisposed the Turkish Government to entertain any propositions of peace except on conditions such as it is unlikely that the Russian Government would accept.

"Her Majesty's Government, however, will bear in mind the communication with which they have been honoured, and the Emperor may rest assured that they will lose no opportunity which appears to them suitable to assist in the restoration of peace. (No. 135, p. 74.)

"August 14, 1877."

Colonel Wellesley arrived at the Russian head-quarters on the 29th August, and communicated the Memorandum to the Emperor. His Majesty expressed his hope that the war might not be prolonged to a second year, and, above all, that he might avoid a conflict with England. He approved the statement in the Memorandum that the present juncture was not a favourable one for opening negotiations. He said that he had commenced the war unwillingly, and with the object of obtaining the recorded wishes of the Great Powers; and, glad as he would be to terminate the war north of the Balkans, he could not do so otherwise than on conditions which would guarantee a solid and lasting peace. (No. 148, p. 80.)

The following observations made by Baron Jomini in regard to the terms of peace which Russia would require were reported by Colonel Wellesley on the 29th October:—

"He believes that the only question of vital importance, and the one which Russia will be compelled to insist on, is that of the destruction of the fortresses, which he thinks would be a sufficient guarantee for the liberty and better government of the Bulgarians.

"He sincerely hoped that the Grand Duke Michael would succeed in capturing Kars before the winter puts an end to military operations, as he thought that Turkey might then agree to give up Batoum to Russia in exchange for the former fortress.

"Baron Jomini thinks that the question of the Dardanelles will not be an obstacle to peace negotiations, and that it is a matter which could hereafter be settled according to the general wish of Europe.

"He told me that M. Nelidoff, formerly First Secretary of the Russian Embassy at Constantinople, and at present attached to the staff of the Grand Duke Nicholas, is strongly of opinion that the question of the fortresses should not be insisted upon by Russia, if by doing so a winter campaign would be rendered inevitable.

"Baron Jomini, however, does not think that a durable peace can be obtained without the destruction of these fortresses, which, as he naively said, would enable the Russians to march into Bulgaria without difficulty should the Turks recommence the oppression of the Christian subjects of the Porte." (No. 184, p. 103.)

On the 21st November Lord A. Loftus, in sending home some articles extracted from the Russian newspapers, made the following observations on public opinion in Russia as to the terms of peace which ought to be demanded:—

"The pretensions and demands of the Russian press augment with every Russian victory, as your Lordship will perceive by the inclosed articles from the 'Novoe Vremia' and 'Golos' on the fall of Kars, both of which organs maintain that there can be no question of restoring that fortress or Pashalic to Turkey, but that it must be kept by Russia, and serve as a basis for 'future offensive operations.'

"From the general tone of these articles it may be clearly deduced that the national aspiration in Russia seeks to acquire sole and undisputed command of the Black Sea and its littoral, to render that sea a *mare clausum*, whilst reserving free outlet for the Russian navy to the Mediterranean.

"Should a Russian army advance to Adrianople (and of this intention there is not the shadow of a doubt), a force could easily be detached to occupy Gallipoli and the Dardanelles, and I have no doubt that if that important strategic and maritime position should ever fall into the hands of Russia it will be converted into an impregnable fortress, and will not be easily given up.

"The same observation may apply to the forts guarding the entry from the Black Sea into the Bosphorus, which, should they ever fall into Russian hands, will be permanently retained and converted into a second Gibraltar." (No. 200, p. 112.)

The following Memorandum was communicated by Lord Derby to Count Schouvaloff on the 13th December:—

"At the outbreak of the present war those of its possible results which, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, would most directly affect British interests, were enumerated in a note addressed to Count Schouvaloff on the 6th May last.

"Amongst these it was stated that Her Majesty's Government were not prepared to witness with indifference the passing of Constantinople into other hands than those of its present possessors.

"The reply of the Russian Government, conveyed in Prince Gortchakow's despatch of 13th May, contained the following assurance on this point:—

"Pour ce qui concerne Constantinople, sans pouvoir préjuger la marche ni l'issue de la guerre, le Cabinet Impérial répète qu'une acquisition de cette capitale est exclue des vues de Sa Majesté

l'Empereur. Il reconnaît qu'en tous cas le sort de Constantinople est une question d'intérêt commun, qui ne peut être réglée que par une entente générale, et que si la possession de cette ville devait être mise en question, elle ne saurait appartenir à aucune des Puissances de l'Europe.'

"While appreciating the courtesy and friendly character of this answer, Her Majesty's Government feel that it does not sufficiently meet the dangers against which they desire to guard. They are strongly of opinion—an opinion which the course of events tends still more to confirm—that the occupation of Constantinople by the Russian forces, even though it should be of a temporary character and for military purposes only, would be an event which it would on all accounts be most desirable to avoid.

"They cannot conceal from themselves that if such an occupation appeared imminent, public feeling in this country, founded on a just appreciation of the consequences to be apprehended, might call for measures of precaution on the part of Great Britain from which they have hitherto felt justified in abstaining.

"It is with the view of avoiding what might endanger seriously the good relations happily maintained between the two countries that Lord Derby has been charged by the Cabinet to express to the Russian Government their earnest hope that, should the Russian armies advance to the south of the Balkans, no attempt will be made to occupy Constantinople or the Dardanelles.

"In the contrary event, Her Majesty's Government must hold themselves free to take whatever course may appear to them necessary for the protection of British interests, but they sincerely trust and confidently believe that any such necessity will be averted by mutual understanding between the two Governments.

"In making this communication they think it right to add that they will be willing, as they have been from the first, to avail themselves of any suitable occasion that may present itself for assisting in the work of mediation and in the restoration of peace." (No. 221, p. 126.)

On the 24th December Colonel Wellesley wrote from Bucharest that the Emperor, before his departure for Russia, had said to him that he hoped the fall of Plevna would lead to a speedy peace based on "suitable conditions." He could not consent to European mediation, but wished the Sultan to apply directly to him, in which case he would be ready to come to terms with him, and *then consult the opinions of his allies.*

"The Emperor laid significant stress on the words "suitable conditions," which conveyed the impression that he was resolved to obtain material compensation for the sacrifices entailed by the war, other than the conditions which Count Schouvaloff communicated to your Lordship in the summer.

"On former occasions the Emperor has invariably assured me that he had no intention of even menacing the interests of Great Britain, but during this conversation His Majesty never alluded to England, except to say that he had heard from Count Schouvaloff that at a Cabinet Council recently held in London the peace party had been in the ascendant ('avait pris le dessus')." (No. 280, p. 158.)

On the 2nd January Count Schouvaloff communicated a Memorandum from Prince Gortchakow in answer to Lord Derby's communication of December 13. In a despatch covering this Memorandum, Prince Gortchakow pointed out that if it became known to the Turks that an attack on Constantinople would make England abandon her neutral attitude, the effect would be to induce them to prolong their resistance in spite of the certainty of its failure, so as to force the Russians to push their operations to the capital. This would in all probability not be the case if the attitude and language of the English Cabinet were such as to persuade the Porte that she has no external assistance to hope for.

"Memorandum.

"Les vues du Cabinet Impérial, quant aux conséquences éventuelles de la guerre auxquelles l'Angleterre s'intéresse particulièrement, n'ont nullement varié.

"Une acquisition de Constantinople n'entre pas plus aujourd'hui qu'avant la guerre dans les intentions de Sa Majesté l'Empereur. Sa Majesté Impériale persiste à considérer le sort de cette capitale comme un intérêt commun ne pouvant être réglé que par une entente générale. Sa Majesté Impériale persévère également dans l'opinion que, si la possession de Constantinople devait être mise en question, elle ne saurait appartenir à aucune des Grandes Puissances de l'Europe.

"Toutefois, Sa Majesté l'Empereur se croit en droit et en devoir d'obliger la Turquie à conclure une paix solide, sérieuse, offrant des garanties efficaces contre le retour des crises permanentes qui troublent le repos de la Russie et celui de l'Europe.

"Ces crises ne peuvent cesser qu'avec l'état des choses qui les engendre.

"L'Europe entière a reconnu l'impossibilité de sa prolongation.

"C'est pour y mettre un terme définitif que Sa Majesté l'Empereur a pris les armes et exposé ses peuples à des lourds sacrifices.

"Ces sacrifices, supportés avec dévouement, font d'autant plus un devoir à Sa Majesté de ne point s'arrêter avant d'avoir obtenu un résultat qui préserve la Russie du renouvellement de semblables épreuves, qui satisfasse ses sentiments Chrétiens, garantisse son repos, et consolide en même temps la paix de l'Europe.

"Ce but doit être atteint. Si l'obstination ou l'illusion de la Porte obligeaient Sa Majesté à

poursuivre les opérations militaires, afin de dicter une paix répondant au but hautement proclamé de la guerre, Sa Majesté Impériale s'est toujours réservée et continue à revendiquer à cet égard la pleine liberté d'action qui est le droit de tout belligérant.

"Mais après les assurances formelles qu'elle a maintes fois données, et qu'elle réitère, Sa Majesté ne saurait comprendre en quoi les intérêts Anglais, tels qu'ils ont été définis par les communications du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique, pourraient être lésés par la marche que Sa Majesté poursuit et doit poursuivre jusqu'à ce que le but de la guerre soit atteint.

"Le Cabinet Impérial, appréciant l'intention amicale qui a dicté la communication de Lord Derby au Comte Schouvaloff, et animé du même désir de maintenir les bonnes relations entre les deux pays, ne croit pas mieux pouvoir y répondre qu'en priant le Secrétaire d'Etat de Sa Majesté Britannique de vouloir bien préciser plus clairement quels sont les intérêts Anglais qu'il juge pouvoir être affectés par les éventualités de la guerre dans les limites où les assurances du Cabinet Impérial les ont circonscrites, afin de rechercher en commun les moyens de concilier ces intérêts avec ceux de la Russie, que Sa Majesté l'Empereur a le devoir de sauvegarder." (No. 299 p. 167.)

Lord A. Loftus communicated to Prince Gortchakow on the 29th December the telegram from Her Majesty's Government of the 27th, inquiring whether the Emperor of Russia would entertain overtures for peace.

In the conversation which ensued Prince Gortchakow observed that no peace could be durable which did not afford efficient guarantees for the future government of the Christian provinces, for which, in his opinion, the Turkish Constitution did not suffice; and he stated very explicitly that without sufficient guarantees there would be no security against the renewal of the former state of misgovernment.

He remarked that the principle of centralisation introduced by Ali and Fuad Pashas had been a great mistake, and that until this system was abolished, there could be no amelioration of government. His Highness strongly maintained that Russia had no wish or intention of destroying the Turkish Empire in Europe. On the contrary, the principal aim of the Imperial Cabinet was to maintain the Sultan at Constantinople, placing the Christian provinces under his suzerainty, as were Roumania and Servia. (No. 329, p. 180.)

In another conversation Prince Gortchakow, alluding to the pledges already given by Russia to respect any British interests which may be supposed to be endangered, asked "What are those British interests which all of a sudden are springing up and producing this alarm? Name them to us, and we shall then know what is their nature, their value, and how they can best be safeguarded." He denied that the existence of the Turkish Empire would be threatened by the advance of a Russian army across the Balkans, and said that should it so happen, England alone would be the cause of it. If the British fleet were sent to the Bosphorus, Turkey would be encouraged to prolong her resistance and England would be thereby participating in her hostility to Russia.

With regard to the supposed understanding between the Imperial Courts Prince Gortchakow said that the attitude of England had not been the same as that of Austria and Germany. They had acted and were acting in perfect accord and harmony with Russia. The policy of the Austrian Cabinet had been consistent throughout and *he placed entire confidence both in Austria and Germany*. England therefore was quite isolated. (No. 331, p. 182.)

Prince Gortchakow having asked, in the Memorandum communicated January 2, for a clearer definition of the English interests which it was thought might be affected by the eventualities of the war, within the limits to which they are confined by the assurances of the Russian Government, in order that means may be sought of conciliating those interests with those of Russia which His Majesty is bound to protect, the following telegram was sent to Lord A. Loftus on the 12th January:—

"In answer to the inquiry contained in the last paragraph of Prince Gortchakow's Memorandum of the 16th December, Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that any operations tending to place the passage of the Dardanelles under the control of Russia would be an impediment to proper consideration of terms of final settlement.

"Ask Prince Gortchakow whether he is willing to give assurance to Her Majesty's Government that no Russian force shall be sent to the peninsula of Gallipoli."

On the 15th Baron Jomini communicated to Lord A. Loftus the following answer from Prince Gortchakow:—

"Russian Government has no intention of directing the military operations on Gallipoli, unless Turkish regular troops should concentrate there. They hope further that, in putting question, Her Majesty's Government do not contemplate an occupation of Gallipoli, which would be a departure from their neutrality, and would encourage Porte to resist."

On the 14th January the following instruction was sent to Lord A. Loftus:—

“In order to avoid possible misconception, and in view of the reports which have reached Her Majesty’s Government, your Excellency should state to Prince Gortchakow that in the opinion of Her Majesty’s Government any Treaty concluded between the Government of Russia and the Porte affecting the Treaties of 1856 and 1871 must be a European Treaty, and would not be valid without the assent of the Powers who were parties to those Treaties.”

P. CURRIE.

Foreign Office,
January 17, 1878.

Doc. 789

ABSTRACT

OF

SECRET AND CONFIDENTIAL CORRESPONDENCE ON THE
EASTERN QUESTION.

PART II.

COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE AUSTRIAN GOVERNMENT.

THE note to Count Schouvaloff of May 6th was communicated to the Austrian Government, and on the 19th May Lord Derby addressed a note to Count Beust, in which he proposed that England and Austria should come to an understanding according to which common interests should be defended by previously concerted action, and invited the Austrian Government to consider and discuss a plan of joint action in the event of a Russian march on Constantinople. (No. 2, p. 2.)

Count Andrassy answered on the 29th May. He stated as follows the Austrian interests which the Austrian Government were determined to defend against all eventualities of the war:—

"Although we consider the Treaty of Paris as capable of modification, and would not insist upon its full maintenance, yet we adhere to the fundamental ideas of that Treaty. Consequently we could not accept:—

"1. That the exclusive protectorate over the Christian populations of the Balkan Peninsula should be conceded to any one Christian Power.

"2. That the definitive settlement of the results of the war should take place without the participation of the Guaranteeing Powers, and that the creation into a State ("Constituierung") of the Christian populations of the Balkan Peninsula should be granted ("oktroyirt") through the action of a single Power.

"Furthermore we cannot consent to:—

"3. An acquisition of territory by Russia on the right bank of the Danube.

"4. The incorporation of Roumania with Russia, or the dependence of that Principality on the Russian Empire.

"5. The erection in the above-named countries of *secundogeniture*, whether Russian or Austro-Hungarian.

"6. The occupation by Russia of Constantinople.

"Finally, no large Slav State should be established at the expense of the non-Slav elements of the Balkan Peninsula, and in any case the reconstitution should be limited at most to the autonomy of the present provinces under a native chief."

Count Andrassy added that the essence of these points had been pointed out to the Russian Government. He had received assurances from the Russian Government against a permanent Russian supremacy over Bulgaria, or in fact on the right bank of the Danube, and against an invasion of Servia by Russian troops. Count Andrassy considered that Austria had a double security, firstly, in the honour of the Emperor Alexander, and secondly, in the knowledge on the part of Russia that Austria had the power and intention to protect her interests.

Austria would not enter upon any hostile action against Russia, as she by her attitude gives no occasion for it.

But if she should change this attitude Austria would stand up for the interests

specified above with the whole strength of the Monarchy and, if necessary, by force of arms.

With regard to the British interests mentioned in the note to Count Schouvaloff, there could be no question at present of the *status quo* being disturbed with regard to the Suez Canal or the Persian Gulf.

With regard to the possession of Constantinople and the free passage of the Bosphorus, Count Andrassy stated his views as follows :—

“ We have taken up a position towards Russia in regard to the first question, and had no occasion to touch upon the latter. As, however, the free passage of the Dardanelles and of the Bosphorus for Russian shipping is identical with the surrender of Constantinople, the two questions appear to us to be but one.

“ We are, in fact, of the opinion to which Lord Derby gives expression in his note of the 19th May, that these points interest us also in a high degree. We cannot, however, refrain from making a special remark as to the view which we take of this interest.

“ That Russia should neither command Constantinople or the Dardanelles is to us of great importance, but we can only contemplate this question in connection with all the important interests which we have defined above. If we should be obliged to concede that the principle of the Treaty of 1856, by which no single Power should exercise a Protectorate over the Balkan Peninsula, must be given up in favour of Russia ; if we allow the creation into a State (“ *Constituirung*”) of these populations to take place through Russian influence, without our co-operation ; if we should permit Russia to incorporate Roumania, to take Bulgaria, or any district on the right bank of the Danube, under its direct rule or *secundogeniture*, the question whether Constantinople were actually in the possession of Russia or not would be a matter of very secondary importance to Austria-Hungary. If we pointed out to Russia that a Russian occupation of Constantinople could not be permitted, it was because of the conviction that the Power in possession of Constantinople must, in the natural course of events, command Bulgaria and other districts of the Balkans, just as the State which holds Bulgaria and the districts beyond must inevitably obtain possession of Constantinople.

“ We accordingly consider all the interests which require protection in the East as bound up together, and are of opinion that no one of them can be given up without sacrificing the other.

“ This conviction determines the exchange of ideas to which the communication of the Earl of Derby has given rise. If his Lordship shares the views of the Imperial and Royal Government the natural solidarity of our interests stands out prominently of itself, and there remains for a further exchange of ideas the question of coming to an understanding as to the means by which these interests can be most surely protected, if possible without endangering the peace of Europe.” (No. 6, p. 4.)

On the 2nd June Lord Derby informed Count Beust that Her Majesty’s Government considered that Count Andrassy’s note contained a frank, clear, and satisfactory statement of the views of the Austria Government, and were prepared for the further exchange of ideas which Count Andrassy had invited as to the manner by which the common interests of England and Austria could be most securely protected. (No. 7, p. 7.)

On the 11th June Count Andrassy expressed to Sir A. Buchanan his gratification at the opinion expressed by Her Majesty’s Government as to his statement of views ; but he was in doubt whether they concurred with him as to the solidarity of the territorial question in the Balkan peninsula with that of Constantinople.

He agreed as to the gravity of the threatened difficulty respecting the navigation of the Dardanelles. He considered that the Russian answer to Her Majesty’s Government admitted that the passage of ships of war through the Straits must be treated as an European one, but he was alarmed at Count Schouvaloff (as reported by Count Beust) maintaining that, as Russia was deprived of a right to send her vessels through the Straits after an unsuccessful war, she would be justified in demanding its restoration after a successful one. He was not aware that Russia ever had such a right, but would have an inquiry made.

“ It may be presumed, however,” he said, “ that if this pretension of Russia is insisted on it will be supported by France and probably by Italy, but he seemed surprised when I added that I feared it would also meet with the support of Germany. The Emperor is at Ischl, and he will probably express no opinion on the subject until His Majesty’s return, but I believe his decision on it will be guided by the importance which Great Britain may attach to it. He said, however, that if all the European Powers have equal interest in Constantinople, as admitted by Russia, it cannot be for the advantage of the others that the town should be placed at the mercy of a Russian fleet within twenty-four hours’ sail of it. He also is fully alive to the inconvenience of Russia becoming a great Mediterranean Power.” (No. 20, p. 15.)

On the 12th June Count Schouvaloff’s terms of peace were telegraphed to Sir A. Buchanan, and he was instructed to ask Count Andrassy what view he took of them. (No. 21, p. 16.)

Sir A. Buchanan was instructed to say that Her Majesty’s Government had

expressed no opinion on these terms, but thought it extremely improbable that the Porte would accept such conditions unless actually reduced to extremities. (No. 32, p. 21.)

On the 13th June Lord Derby asked Count Beust the following questions :—

“ Are the Austrian Government willing to accept the fact of a Russian occupation of Constantinople, or would they in case of need join with that of England to prevent such occupation taking place ?

“ Russia has given no promise that she will not occupy Constantinople—she declines to do so. Do the Austrian Government think it safe that she should go there, relying on her assurance that she will not stay ? ”

He also called the attention of the Austrian Government to the fact that Russia affirmed that a complete understanding existed with Austria as to the conditions to be imposed on Turkey, and that German diplomatists held the same language.

Such an impression must tend to neutralize the influence of Austria, and the risk of a future collision would be greatly diminished if it were clearly understood beforehand what acts on the part of Russia Austria would, or would not, be prepared to oppose. (No. 26, p. 19.)

Count Andrassy having expressed doubts as to the concurrence of Her Majesty's Government in his opinion as to the solidarity of the territorial question in the Balkans with that of Constantinople, Sir A. Buchanan was instructed to state that Her Majesty's Government agreed in the general principles laid down in Count Andrassy's despatch of 29th May. (No. 37, p. 22.)

On the 15th June Count Andrassy informed Sir A. Buchanan that the Russian Ambassador had communicated to him the Russian terms of peace, which were the same as those telegraphed from London, with the exception that Roumania was to receive a compensation for Bessarabia in the Dobrudja, whether she becomes independent or remains a vassal of the Porte. He thought that the terms would not be accepted by the Porte except under extreme pressure, but that they might be made the basis of a transaction, and he hoped that Her Majesty's Government would not express a decided opinion against them until they had received a statement of his views which he was sending to Count Beust. (No. 39, p. 22.)

On the 16th June, Count Beust informed Lord Derby that Count Andrassy telegraphed, in answer to the questions put to him on the 13th, that the confidence of Austria in the promises of Russia is not absolute. He promised to communicate with perfect clearness to Her Majesty's Government the means by which the interests of England and Austria could, in his opinion, be protected under all circumstances, but he observed that it was difficult to give a positive assurance in reply to a special question. For the moment he could only repeat that, in his opinion, England ought, in each phase of the question, to avoid rejecting the proposals of Russia, and to make them the basis of fresh negotiations. (No. 43, p. 24.)

On the 19th June, Lord Derby pressed earnestly on Count Beust the importance of some action being taken by his Government with a view of preventing terms of peace being imposed on the Porte which would be permanently injurious to Austrian interests. He referred especially to the semi-independent Bulgarian State which was to extend south of the Balkans, and pointed out that that line of defence would consequently cease to exist ; that all the Turkish fortresses within this territory would be destroyed or made over, and, therefore, that the road to Constantinople would lie open and unguarded whenever a Russian army was ordered to march there. Lord Derby said that perhaps Austria was relying on the opposition of other Powers, but that, in his personal opinion, England would be reluctant to enter into a second Crimean war without an ally. An Austrian refusal to co-operate might therefore lead to, and justify inaction on the part of England, whereas, if the two countries acted together, there was not only no doubt of success, but no danger of war, since Russia would not provoke the hostility of two leading Powers while already engaged in hostilities. (No. 48, p. 27.)

On the 22nd June, Count Andrassy wrote in answer to Lord Derby's inquiries. He said that, although he had the fullest reliance on the word of the Emperor, his confidence in the assurances of Russia was not unlimited, as the influence of internal currents of agitation must not be left out of account. He was certain on one point, viz., that Austria and England united possessed at any time sufficient material force to refuse to admit those consequences of the war that are contrary to their interests. He stated his views as to a Russian occupation of Constantinople as follows :—

"The question about the possession of Constantinople is amongst those on which we also have stated our views very clearly to Russia. Not only have we expressly declared a Russian seizure of Constantinople to be inadmissible, but we have never said even that we would allow a temporary occupation of that city. I have myself asked for explanation from M. de Novikoff on this very point. The Russian Ambassador has repeatedly assured me that the Emperor Alexander does not think of occupying Constantinople even temporarily. But he has stated to me two reasons which render it impossible for his Sovereign to give a binding promise to that effect.

"The first was, that a declaration tending to limit not only the consequences of the war, but even the very course of the war, would be highly offensive to the national feeling in Russia. The second reason adduced by M. de Novikoff was, that if the Porte were to become aware of this reservation, she would make peace neither on this nor on the other side of the Balkans, and would act so as to make Russia violate her pledge. Thus the very promise given would compel the Russian Government to do what it is otherwise in a position to avoid.

"I cannot deny that there is force in this latter argument. Moreover, I am convinced that the Emperor Alexander and his Government earnestly wish to avoid being under the necessity of occupying Constantinople, and that for this very reason they would be glad to come to an understanding with Austria-Hungary and England, which would enable them to close the campaign while yet on this side of the Balkans. As a voucher for the sincerity of this wish, I adduce my own conviction that, in the present state of Turkey and the existing circumstances of Europe, it must appear to Russia a far easier task to get into Constantinople than to leave it again. English statesmen have rightly felt how difficult it would be for the Russian Government to relinquish Stamboul when once taken. Russia must feel this still more clearly. It seems to be thought in London that, had the Russian army once crossed the Balkans, it would be difficult to protest against an occupation of Constantinople except by words. I, on the contrary, cannot imagine any period at which a joint mediation of Austria-Hungary and England could not compel Russia to evacuate Constantinople in the very shortest time. The appearance of the English fleet in the Straits, a few days' march of our army against the Russian line of retreat, would necessitate the immediate retreat of the Russian army. This conviction is founded on a mathematical basis. Every mile the Russian army advances from its base of operations, contracted as it is, increases the difficulties of Russia.

"On the other hand, the Russian Government knows besides that an occupation of Constantinople must cause a commotion of all elements in the East to an extent and with a vehemence far beyond the aims and the calculations of Russian policy. She knows that she would either have to hold the Turkish capital against the will of England and Austria-Hungary, certainly against that of Europe also, or to evacuate it. She knows that the first is impossible, and that the second would draw upon her from the whole of the Slavonic world the reproach of indecision and impotence, and deprive her of all the moral results of the struggle.

"This is our appreciation of the position in which Russia would find herself after having crossed the Balkans, and your Excellency was, therefore, perfectly right when you pointed out in your reports that to stop before the Balkans would be more advantageous to victorious Russia than if she were obliged to cross them in order to obtain a peace. The important question is not when and where, but how and upon what conditions, the peace is to be concluded."

On these grounds Count Andrassy did not think it either expedient or necessary to check Russian action at the Balkans. He would not, however, raise any objection to an occupation of Gallipoli by England if it was undertaken as a measure for the protection of her interests in the East, and not with the character of a declaration of war.

Count Andrassy reserved the right of adopting such measures as might be suitable for the special purpose of preventing the formation of new States on the frontiers of Austria, which might directly or indirectly endanger the possession or tranquillity of her border lands. He did not consider an occupation of Serbia or Roumania desirable for this purpose. The latter would imply war with Russia, and such a war would, for Austria, be a life and death struggle.

He did not consider the crossing of the Balkans by the Russian army as a reason for embarking in such a struggle.

Count Andrassy summed up as follows:—

"We maintain the principles expressed in our despatch of May 29.

"We are not afraid that accomplished facts can forestall the vindication of our interests.

"We think it neither expedient nor necessary to concentrate our action on preventing the Russians from crossing the Balkans.

"On the other hand, we also lay the greatest stress on the principle that peace shall not be concluded without our participation.

"We maintain that the results of the war must be subjected to European approval.

"In case peace were not to be concluded on this side of the Balkans, Russia has reserved to herself freedom of action in her demands. We are of opinion that hence follows equal freedom for us and England to protect our interests by an ostensible act.

"It remains for the Royal British Cabinet to decide whether it would take such a step before or after the Russian army has crossed the Balkans.

"We also reserve to ourselves to protect the most direct interest of the Monarchy by an appropriate act.

"It is of the highest importance to us that Lord Derby acknowledges the solidarity of our interests and English interests.

"We also are prepared to accept—as more particularly stated in our despatch of the 29th May—the English reservations, and to adopt them as our own.

"This solidarity seems to us to offer the basis for co-operation in case one of the interests mentioned should be actually endangered.

"As regards the Russian propositions, I reserve it to myself to revert to them." (No. 57, p. 33.)

On the 30th June Lord Derby proposed to Count Beust the signature of a Protocol, placing on record the understanding arrived at between the two Governments. He expressed satisfaction that the Austrian Government were agreed with Her Majesty's Government as to the main features of the policy which the two countries should pursue. He differed only as to the importance of the occupation by Russia of Constantinople. (No. 61, p. 40.)

On the 9th June Count Beust communicated a telegram from Count Andrassy declining to sign a Protocol, on the ground that the Austrian Government, having informed Russia of their intention to remain neutral if their interests were respected, and a promise having been given, the sincerity of which they had not, up to the present time, any reason to doubt, they could not loyally enter into an engagement for warlike action, which would constitute an act of hostility even if it were never known to Russia. The Austrian Government could not expose themselves to the risk of having to give an untrue answer to questions on the subject asked by the Russian Government or in Parliament. On the other hand there would be no objection to their declaring the solidarity of their interests with those of a third Power, and that they would, in the event of their being compromised, defend them by force of arms. He proposed the following *modus procedendi* :—

"Les deux Puissances ayant constaté quelles sont les conséquences de la guerre qu'elles regardent toutes les deux comme inadmissibles, s'engageraient chacune pour elle seule, et sans se réclamer de l'autre, de faire valoir de cas en cas par voie diplomatique les intérêts reconnus solidaires. Si dans le courant des événements des intérêts reconnus solidaires allaient être exposés de fait à être compromis alors le moment serait venu de se concerter selon les exigences de la situation sur une action matérielle combinée à l'effet de prévenir ce danger."

With regard to the Dardanelles Count Andrassy made the following proposal :—

"Nous sommes également prêts à ajouter aux points que nous avons articulés les réserves Anglaises relatives au passage des Dardanelles. Nous nous contentons d'une simple déclaration du Cabinet Anglais portant que tels sont les points sur lesquels il est décidé à ne pas céder. Nous sommes de notre côté prêts à faire la même déclaration, et comme nous n'admettons pas de doute dans la sincérité de nos paroles nous n'irons pas au-delà. En même temps nous constaterions que nous n'avons aucune raison de supposer que la Russie ne respecterait pas nos intérêts, mais que si à la suite de l'imprévu et de la force majeure nos intérêts se trouvaient cependant menacés nous les défendrions au besoin les armes à la main, soit seuls, soit conjointement avec l'Angleterre. Dans le premier cas notre action se réglerait selon les exigences de notre situation ; dans la dernière éventualité nous pourrions nous concerter le moment donné sur une action commune." (No. 77, p. 46.)

On the 11th July Lord Derby, with the view of removing any possibility of misapprehension as to the precise nature of the points on which the two Governments were agreed, asked if the Austrian Government, after hearing the Russian conditions of peace, still held the view stated in Count Andrassy's note of May 29, that "No large Slav State should be established at the expense of the non-Slav elements of the Balkan Peninsula, and in any case the reconstruction should be limited at most to the autonomy of the present provinces under a native Chief." (No. 79, p. 47.)

To this question Count Andrassy returned the following answer, which was communicated by Count Beust on the 14th July :—

"The Russian conditions of peace, Count Andrassy says, as originally presented by Count Schouvaloff, are not inconsistent with the seventh of the points laid down in his Excellency's despatch of May 29. Some sort of autonomy, he argues, must be conceded to Bulgaria in case the Porte is definitively worsted, although he thinks it would be difficult to grant it in the way foreshadowed in the Russian proposals. In any case, however, the Austrian Government adhere to the second point mentioned in the despatch above referred to, stipulating that no definitive settlement shall be arrived at without the concurrence of all the Powers. With regard to the pretension which has since been advanced to constitute an autonomous Bulgaria extending across the Balkans, Count Andrassy says that he has already stated to M. de Novikoff that the Austrian Government would require explanations on this point, as they considered the creation of so large a Slavonic State in the Balkan Peninsula, absorbing as it would do large non-Slavonic populations, to be inadmissible. He had added that Austria reserved to herself the right to an authoritative voice on the subject at the close of the war."

Count Andrassy suggested that England might declare, as Austria has done, her objections to the creation of a too extended Bulgaria, or might lay down the principle that nothing can be settled in regard to such matters without the participation of the Powers generally.

He disclaimed any intention of inducing England to abstain from action. His desire had been to define the eventualities in which Austria would co-operate with England, but both Governments equally might reserve their freedom of action for any step thought expedient for the protection of their respective interests.

Lord Derby expressed satisfaction at Count Andrassy's declaration that the creation of an autonomous Bulgaria extending south of the Balkans would be regarded by Austria as inadmissible. Lord Derby had no objection to sign a Declaration instead of a Protocol, and suggested that a draft should be sent by Count Andrassy of what he was prepared to sign, and if the form was agreed to, a similar Declaration might be signed on the part of Her Majesty's Government. (No. 81, p. 48.)

In consequence of some remarks made by Sir A. Buchanan, Count Beust was instructed to state to Lord Derby that, according to the view taken by the Austrian Government, any direct reference by one Power to the other, or any mention in the British Parliament of an understanding hostile to Russia having been arrived at between Austria and England is absolutely precluded; and further, that Austria would certainly prefer that England should confine herself to taking measures of precaution rather than that Austria should run the risk of being used for the purpose of intimidating Russia before the latter Power had given her any serious reason for hostile action.

Lord Derby said that it had been quite understood on the part of Her Majesty's Government that the negotiations were secret, and they had been carefully kept so as far as Her Majesty's Government were concerned. (No. 80, p. 48.)

On the 16th July Count Beust stated to Lord Derby that he was authorized to state officially that no engagement exists between Austria and Russia other than that which results from the despatches and telegrams already communicated to Her Majesty's Government.

On being asked what was meant by this phrase, Count Beust replied that it amounted to this—that the Austrian Government have accepted certain assurances given by Russia, and consider themselves pledged to treat those assurances as sincere unless evidence should appear to the contrary. No secret understanding or engagement of any kind, his Excellency said, exists between the two Governments. (No. 87, p. 52.)

On the 21st July Lord Derby requested Count Beust to ascertain from Count Andrassy in what manner he proposed to distinguish between the permanent occupation of Constantinople, which Austria and England had pledged themselves to resist, and a merely temporary occupation, with regard to which he had given no similar assurance. (No. 94, p. 55.)

On the 23rd July Sir A. Buchanan telegraphed that he had communicated to Count Andrassy Lord Derby's views as expressed to Count Beust on the 14th July. Count Andrassy "explained that he had not said it would be difficult to grant autonomy to Bulgaria in the way foreshadowed by Russia, but that it would be difficult to induce the Porte to do so. He also observed that his opinion that a large Slavonic State in the Balkan Peninsula is inadmissible would require explanation, for though he will object to other nationalities being absorbed in the proposed Bulgarian State, he said that the extent of Bulgaria is not yet clearly defined, and he does not think a mile or two of territory claimed for that province, on the south of the Balkan (a term also open to different interpretations), should be made a *casus belli*. He is, however, about to state his views on this point to Count Beust. He also told me that the draft Declaration will be immediately forwarded to London. It has already received the Emperor's approval." (No. 96, p. 56.)

On the 30th July Count Beust communicated to Lord Derby the following despatch from Count Andrassy, containing the Declaration of the Austrian Government as to the results of the war which the two Governments were agreed not to permit:—

"L'échange d'idées auquel le Cabinet de St. James nous a conviés a eu pour but de préciser celles des conséquences éventuelles de la guerre actuelle en Orient que nos deux Gouvernements ne sauraient admettre. Il résulte des pourparlers qui ont eu lieu à cette fin que nous considérerions comme inadmissible:—

"1. La protection exclusive d'une Puissance sur les populations Chrétiennes de la presqu'île des Balkans.

" 2. Le règlement définitif des résultats de la guerre en dehors du concours des Puissances Garantes, ou une organisation politique de la presqu'île des Balkans octroyée par une seule Puissance.

" 3. Une acquisition territoriale par la Russie sur la rive droite du Danube.

" 4. L'incorporation de la Roumanie à la Russie, ou l'établissement d'un protectorat Russe sur cette Principauté.

" 5. L'établissement d'une secondo-géniture Russe ou Austro-Hongrois dans les contrées précitées ;

" 6. La prise de possession de Constantinople par la Russie ;

" 7. L'établissement d'un grand Etat Slave au détriment des populations non-Slaves de la presqu'île des Balkans. (En tout cas le maximum d'une nouvelle organisation ne devrait pas dépasser le cadre d'une autonomie politique des provinces actuelles avec un chef indigène à leur tête.)

" Nous sommes prêts à ajouter à ces points la réserve Anglaise touchant les Dardanelles et le Bosphore. C'est-à-dire, nous estimons que l'ancienne règle sur la fermeture de ces détroits doit être maintenue, et que, s'il y avait lieu d'apporter une modification de détail, cette modification ne pourrait s'effectuer qu'à la suite d'un accord commun entre les Puissances Garantes.

" Votre Excellence est autorisée à déclarer au Cabinet de St. James que, de même que le Gouvernement Britannique, nous estimons chacune des combinaisons précitées comme incompatibles avec nos intérêts réciproques, et que nous sommes résolus à ne pas les admettre.

" Les conséquences inadmissibles de la guerre étant ainsi clairement constatées, le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Impériale et Royale Apostolique et celui de Sa Majesté la Reine de la Grande Brétagne sont d'avis que le *modus procedendi* le plus apte à garantir les intérêts ci-dessus définis, consiste à ce que chacune des deux Puissances exerce de son côté et sans se référer l'une à l'autre une action parallèle mais indépendante à mesure que la nécessité s'en fera sentir.

" A l'exception du point sur les Détroits, qui n'a pas fait l'objet d'une communication spéciale entre les Cabinets de Vienne et de St. Pétersbourg, et sur lequel nous ne connaissons pas les vues de ce dernier, nous avons lieu de croire que le Gouvernement Impérial de Russie respectera nos intérêts mutuels exposés plus haut. Jusqu'ici aucun fait ne nous autorise à présumer qu'il ait l'intention de se soustraire aux assurances qu'il nous a données ainsi qu'à l'Angleterre. Néanmoins si, sous la pression des événements qui se déroulent en Orient, ou d'une force majeure imprévue, le Cabinet de St. Pétersbourg n'était plus en état de les maintenir, nous serions prêts à aviser, au moment donné, en commun avec le Gouvernement de la Reine, aux mesures ultérieures pour la sauvegarde matérielle et pour la défense de ceux de nos intérêts réciproques qui seraient menacés d'une atteinte.

" Telle est la déclaration que vous êtes autorisé à faire à Lord Derby. Vous pourrez laisser à sa Seigneurie une copie de cette dépêche, s'il vous en exprime le désir." (No. 116, p. 63.)

At the same time the following document was read to Lord Derby by Count Beust:—

" The Austrian declaration is in conformity with what has been stated in Count Andrassy's telegrams. Count Beust is authorized to leave a copy of it with Lord Derby on condition that he expresses a desire for it, that he promises to send to the Austrian Government a corresponding declaration, and that he repeats the promise that no use shall be made of it either in Parliament or in communications to other Governments.

" In presence of the events which are developing themselves in the East, and considering the impossibility of foreseeing their issue, it is only right that those who have the responsibility of the government of a great State should weigh in time the chances of the future, and should exchange views with a friendly Cabinet which has common interests to preserve. It is their right and duty. The publication of transactions starting from the supposition of the non-execution of promises which have been given would easily assume a character offensive to the Power interested, and might lead to the precise eventualities which it is desired to prevent. This is the reason which compels the Austrian Government to attach the highest importance to absolute secrecy as regards their exchange of views with Her Majesty's Government."

" As regards the reservation relative to the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus implied in the Declaration.

" It is understood that the Austrian Government are agreed with England as to the necessity of maintaining the ancient rule of the closing of the said Straits. On the other hand, as it would be possible that any one of the Powers should propose to make in this rule some modification which would injure neither the interests of Austria nor those of England, the Austrian Government have thought it right to insert in their declaration the passage stating that they would not consider a modification of detail as a *casus belli*.

" Thus, for example, the abolition of the clause which gives the Sultan the right of opening the Straits in time of peace to vessels of war of the friendly and allied Powers, would not be regarded by them as a *casus belli*.

" From a feeling of loyalty towards Her Majesty's Government, and in order to guard against any misunderstanding, the Austrian Government lay stress upon Lord Derby's being informed of this.

" The supposition in question, Count Andrassy says, is his own personal idea merely ; it has not been suggested by anybody. The Austrian Government are entirely ignorant of the intentions of the Cabinet of St. Petersburg on this point, as they have entered into no discussion with them on the subject. Count Beust is authorized to give an assurance to this effect if Lord Derby should express an opinion that the Austrian Government have any grounds for presuming that the modification above-mentioned would be demanded by Russia, or would be regarded by her as sufficient.

"As regards parallel but independent action."

"In the present situation a collective representation or action—diplomatic or otherwise—or an appeal to the reciprocal understanding between the two countries (leaving out of the question the fact that the present attitude of the Russian Government does not as yet seem to justify it) would be calculated to wound national susceptibilities in Russia. To place the understanding on record by a declaration to Parliament or an appeal by one Government to the other in any communication to a third Power seems to the Austrian Government quite as inadmissible as to embody it in a Protocol. If any one of the common interests of the two countries, as they have been defined, should be attacked, or even seriously menaced, an agreement as to the means of defending it could be arrived at without difficulty or delay. For this reason the Austrian Government consider that any collective step or demonstration is inopportune and excluded under present circumstances." (No. 117, p. 64.)

Count Beust also read the following reply from Count Andrassy to Lord Derby's question as to what the Austrian Government understood by a temporary occupation of Constantinople:—

"Up to the present moment, Count Andrassy said, the Austrian Government had in no way allowed the Russian Government to suppose that they would tolerate a temporary occupation of the Turkish capital, although they had appreciated the reasons which made it difficult for the Emperor Alexander to enter beforehand into an engagement that no such occupation should take place. In their view it is to be desired that the Russians should not go to Constantinople at all, and that in the contrary case they should evacuate it without delay. This, in case of need, they would be ready to declare to Russia in their own name as soon as they clearly understand the views and intentions of England, which at present, Count Andrassy states, they cannot say they do. In no case do they consider that the establishment of Russian authority or the publication of administrative measures at Constantinople would be admissible, inasmuch as such acts would imply taking possession. It does not seem to his Excellency that it would be practicable to fix any precise term beyond which the occupation should not last." (No. 120, p. 67.)

On August 3 Count Beust communicated a despatch from Count Andrassy of July 26 giving further explanations in regard to his views as to the creation of an autonomous Bulgarian state with reference to Lord Derby's conversation with Count Beust of the 14th July.

Austria continued, he said, to consider as inadmissible the establishment of a great Slav State to the detriment of the non-Slav populations, and the settlement of the results of the war without the concurrence of the Powers. But she does not consider *à priori*, as far as she is concerned, every extension whatsoever of Bulgaria beyond the Balkans as a *casus belli*. In the first place a precise definition of the Balkans is impossible, owing to their extent. Secondly, any extension must be a limited one, as it could not be effected without the consent of Austria and England. While recognising the danger of a Bulgaria extending to Adrianople, Count Andrassy did not think that the point of chief importance was the addition to the new Bulgaria of some districts on the southern slope of the Balkans. The essential question is, Will Russia evacuate Bulgaria and exercise no special protection there? With a permanent Russian occupation the line of the Balkans would not be an effective defence for Turkey. On the other hand, if Bulgaria is occupied only by a national militia, and is independent of Russia, the danger to Constantinople will be far less. If once the wishes of the Bulgarians are satisfied with liberality, their aspirations will be all for independence.

"La démarcation des Balkans ne devrait pas être, à notre avis, le pivot de notre conduite politique, tandis qu'il importe surtout qu'à la fin de la guerre la Bulgarie soit évacuée aussitôt que faire se pourra par les armées Russes, qu'il n'y soit pas créé un grand Etat Slave, et que la Roumanie et la Bulgarie restent complètement indépendantes de la Russie.

"Dans les circonstances présentes ce programme nous paraît la seule sauvegarde pratique et possible de nos intérêts et de ceux de l'Angleterre, engagés au même titre dans la question spéciale qui fait l'objet de cette dépêche." (No. 127, p. 69.)

The Turkish Ambassador having been instructed to inquire whether any alliance existed between the British and Austrian Governments, Lord Derby answered that no such alliance existed, but that an exchange of ideas was taking place between the two Governments, and that he had reason to think that, in most respects, the opinion formed in Vienna as to the present state of affairs in the East was not unlikely to be in accordance with that of Her Majesty's Government. He could not, however, speak with confidence or certainty on the subject. (No. 129, p. 70.)

There being reason to believe that Servia was about to send a force into Turkey to co-operate with the Roumanians, Sir A. Buchanan was instructed, on August 9, to ask Count Andrassy whether Austria-Hungary was prepared to take any steps to deter

Servia from recommencing war with Turkey, and what would be her attitude in case the Servian forces should actually take the field. (No. 130, p. 70.)

On the 13th Count Andrassy answered that Austria, being neutral, would not intervene in the military operations of the present war, and so long as Servia contented herself with declaring war against Turkey, no opposition would be offered, either by military or diplomatic means, to her eventual action. If, however, Servia should invade Bosnia, and so disturb the repose of the Austro-Hungarian frontier, Austria would meet this by an occupation of Bosnia, reserving to herself the right of further occupying Servia in case of need. (No. 132, p. 71.)

On August 14 Lord Derby addressed a despatch to Sir A. Buchanan in answer to the declaration of the Austrian Government contained in Count Andrassy's despatch of July 26.

After recapitulating the points stated in that despatch to be incompatible with Austrian interests, Lord Derby enumerated the British interests which had been laid down in the note to Count Schouvaloff of May 6, and the assurances in regard to them received from the Russian Government. He concluded with the following declaration :—

"Her Majesty's Government have been glad to find that the Cabinet of Austria are agreed with them as to the necessity of preventing the possession of Constantinople by Russia, and as to the expediency of maintaining the present arrangements for the closing of the Straits of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus to the ships of war of foreign Powers. With regard to the reservation made in Count Andrassy's despatch respecting the possible introduction of some modification of detail into these latter provisions, with the concurrence of the Guaranteeing Powers, Her Majesty's Government, without rejecting absolutely the idea of all modification whatsoever, are still of opinion that such a change would be undesirable, and that in any case it would be necessary to guard carefully against proposals calculated to leave Constantinople at the mercy of a Russian fleet, or to allow unrestricted egress to the Russian naval forces for aggressive purposes from the Black Sea into the Mediterranean. For the same reason Her Majesty's Government would feel strong objections, which they doubt not would be shared by the Mediterranean Powers, to the provisional or permanent acquisition by Russia of a port on the Mediterranean coast.

"The other points mentioned in Count Andrassy's despatch, though some of them do not affect British interests so immediately as those which I have just mentioned, are yet objectionable either in themselves or in their ulterior consequences, and Her Majesty's Government are prepared to join with that of Austria in opposing them, if occasion should arise.

"The mode of proceeding proposed by Count Andrassy for effecting the object in view is not, perhaps, calculated to secure the same attention to the representations of the two Powers as might be effected by a more openly concerted action in the first instance. But Her Majesty's Government understand and appreciate the objections raised by Count Andrassy to the latter course, and are prepared to pursue that which the Austrian Government considers best fitted to their position." (No. 134, p. 72.)

This despatch was communicated by Sir A. Buchanan on the 24th August to Count Andrassy, who observed that notwithstanding his reservation he concurred with Her Majesty's Government as to a change in the existing arrangements respecting the Straits being inadmissible, and said that the exchange of Declarations between the two Governments had now established a satisfactory basis for future action should it be necessary. (No. 142, p. 78.)

Count Andrassy expressed, through Count Beust, his great satisfaction at the contents of Lord Derby's despatch, and his full appreciation of the advantages of the existence of a good understanding between the two Governments. Although it would have no immediate effect so long as Russia did not, in the claims which she might ultimately advance, exceed the admissible limits, it would remain a valuable proof of mutual confidence. If, on the other hand, Russia should find herself, from any reason, unable to fulfil her promises, it would then offer a firm basis for ulterior agreement upon the best means of securing or defending such of the reciprocal interests of the two countries as might be menaced. (No. 145, p. 79.)

The Austrian Ambassador on his return to England from leave of absence in October, spoke to Lord Derby at length on the policy of the Austrian Government. He said that Count Andrassy was opposed to any attempt at mediation unless the belligerents should ask for it. His reason for doing so was that when Russia a year ago proposed to Austria a joint occupation of Bulgaria and Bosnia, the Emperor had replied that although he could not prevent Russia from going to war, he thought it right to warn her that, having once invaded Bulgaria, she might find it difficult to withdraw, in which case it would be necessary for Austria to insist on her retiring, even if it were necessary to resort to force. Having thus acted loyally to Russia and given her fair warning, it was not the business of the Austrian Government to give

the Emperor of Russia an opportunity of saying that he had been again prevented from fulfilling the historic mission of Russia by the intervention of a foreign Power. Russia must show that with full liberty of action she is unable to settle the Eastern question in her own way, and for the exclusive benefit of the Slav races.

Being asked how Count Andrassy's views would be affected if Russia obtained a decisive success, Count Beust could give no decided answer, but thought that interference would be contrary to the understanding between Austria and Russia.

In answer to a further question, he said that Count Andrassy and Prince Bismarck were closely allied and were acting in common. Prince Bismarck, he said, was entirely in favour of the Russian cause, and would do what he could to help them. Count Andrassy did not think a direct understanding between Russia and Turkey was to be apprehended. If the Turkish forces continued to have the advantage, the policy of Austria would be directed to maintaining the European control over the Porte which had been established by the Treaty of Paris.

The Austrian Government had abstained from interfering with Servia, first, because they thought it unlikely that she would take up arms until success had been achieved by Russia; and, secondly, because if Austria gave a warning which Servia neglected, she must follow up the warning by action, which would be inconvenient, and would involve the risk of war with Russia.

Count Beust said that Austria was prepared to insist on the withdrawal of the Russians from Bulgaria immediately on the conclusion of peace. He did not think that there was much danger of the Russians being able to effect the razing of the fortresses. (No. 152, p. 84.)

On the 28th November the fall of Plevna appeared imminent, and Count Schouvaloff's language seeming to imply that he expected an early and decisive victory over the Turks, Lord Derby informed Count Beust that he thought it full time for all the Powers interested in the fate of Constantinople to consider what course they would take in the event of a Russian occupation. He was aware that Austria would object to the retention of Constantinople by Russia, but that was a different question.

What course would Count Andrassy be prepared to pursue if a Russian army should approach the Turkish capital with an evident intention to occupy it? (No. 203, p. 117.)

Count Andrassy replied that his declarations on this subject were already sufficiently explicit, and he had shown no inclination to withdraw them. He had explained in his despatch of the 22nd June why he declined to demand beforehand a promise from Russia not to march upon Constantinople. He wished to avoid even a temporary occupation; he would not look on in silence at a *more protracted* occupation; but he would consider a *permanent* "prise de possession" as a *casus belli*, and act in consequence; and he would loyally give notice of the above to Russia at the moment when a real danger of the occupation of Constantinople by her becomes existent.

"If, notwithstanding the understanding between England and Austria, the British Government still dwells upon the difficulty of eventually dislodging the Russian troops from Constantinople, they must either overlook circumstances to which Russia is fully alive,—the geographical position of Austria and the million of soldiers she has at her command,—or they must doubt the sincerity of the Austrian declarations. The Austrian Government have done nothing to justify such a doubt.

"The Austrian Government do not agree in the opinion that a Russian occupation of Constantinople is to be apprehended during the present season. They had expressed the same view in June last, and, as they then proved to be correct, their opinion seems to have still more foundation now, when the Russian army have first to accomplish the crossing of the Balkans.

"We maintain word for word one and all of our declarations." (Nos. 207 and 208, p. 119.)

On the 15th December, Sir A. Buchanan, in reporting a conversation with Count Andrassy as to the Turkish appeal for the mediation of the Powers, stated that "nothing could be more decided than the declaration of his anxiety to maintain his understanding with England, and his desire that the two Powers should move in concert for the attainment of the object and in conformity with the programme agreed upon between them." (No. 236, p. 134.)

A few days later Sir A. Buchanan spoke to Baron Orczy on the question of the opening of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus to ships of war. "From the language of his Excellency I think," he says, "your Lordship may be assured that no change has taken place in the policy of Austria as to the expediency of maintaining the exclusion

of ships of war from the Straits, an arrangement to which Baron Orczy said that Count Andrassy attached very great importance." (No. 238, p. 135.)

On the 19th December, Sir A. Buchanan was instructed to communicate to the Austrian Government the draft of a despatch which Her Majesty's Government proposed to address to Lord A. Loftus, instructing him to recall the attention of the Russian Government to the assurances received from them by Her Majesty's Government in June and July, and to inform the Emperor that Her Majesty's Government are willing to communicate to the Porte the conditions of peace mentioned by Count Schouvaloff on the 8th June, "not as expressing approval of or assuming responsibility for them in their present shape, but as a possible basis for an interchange of views which may lead to more formal negotiations for the restoration of peace."

Sir A. Buchanan was to say that in taking this step Her Majesty's Government believe that they are following the line of policy indicated by Count Andrassy, and may succeed in bringing to a practical issue the overtures for peace made in the Porte's Circular with a view to a basis for peace being formulated on which Great Britain and Austria may subsequently act in concert. (No. 232, p. 131.)

Count Andrassy strongly objected to the communication of the Russian peace proposals to the Porte. The fact alone of the first condition as to the erection of Bulgaria into a vassal State being communicated by England would make the Porte look upon her as her deadliest enemy, and would lead Turkey to surrender at discretion to Russia. This condition stipulated the withdrawal of Turkish functionaries and troops from Bulgaria, the razing of the fortresses, and the creation of a Bulgarian militia, while maintaining the suzerainty of the Porte, *i.e.*, it would create an autonomy in Bulgaria that would hand over the remaining Mahometan population to the Bulgarians without the protection of troops or civil functionaries, leaving them no safety but in emigration. It would be senseless to expect the Porte to establish such a state of things, and the idea if accepted would be impracticable. The money too for carrying out this project of administrative reform would have to be found by Turkey, who would thus pay the cost of the ejection of her Mussulman population and of the evacuation of her fortresses. Therefore, said Count Andrassy, in a telegram to Count to Count Beust dated December 21 :—

"I contend that there are only two alternatives for the future constitution of Bulgaria: either a completely dissevered independent Bulgaria, such as Servia is in fact (in which case every trace of Turkish dominion and Turkish inhabitants would vanish), or the maintenance of Bulgaria as a Turkish Pashalic, the utmost concession in this case being the nomination of Christian Pashas and an autonomous administration.

"Each of these alternatives is feasible; the first would necessarily involve the throwing open of the land route to Constantinople (*"Preisgebung des Landweges nach Constantinopel"*).

"Everything else is intrinsically absurd, and could only be put forward without the slightest account being taken of the state of things as it really exists." (No. 246, p. 140.)

In a further despatch to Count Beust, dated December 22, Count Andrassy reiterated his objections to the course proposed by Her Majesty's Government. He did not understand, he said, whether England was going in the first instance to negotiate with Russia on the basis of the conditions of peace communicated in June, or was going previously to come to an understanding with Austria on the conditions of peace. In the former case Austria must also have sounded Russia, who would then easily have turned the mutual isolation of England and Austria to her profit in order to exact her most sweeping conditions.

"If, on the contrary, England stands fast by our agreement, we can both of us, to our own good and to that of Europe, prevent Russia from bringing about a situation which would either establish Russia's preponderance in the East or lead to war.

"Our standpoint remains the same, such as I often have explained it to your Excellency.

"All along we have refused to take the initiative of mediation, and we still refuse to do so.

"The following were and are the reasons for our refusal:—

"1. We cannot imagine any conditions of peace to which it would be possible to make the neutral Powers agree.

"2. We cannot either imagine any propositions emanating from Powers that have not taken part in the war, which the belligerents would not necessarily reject. Thus the *modus procedendi* lately contemplated by England would, besides the disadvantages already mentioned, have the further one, that the first point would be unacceptable to the Porte, whereas the others would to-day be unacceptable to Russia.

"3. We do not feel ourselves called upon to take the responsibility for insoluble problems that have been put forward by others; such, for instance, as the Russian idea of a Bulgarian vassal State, in which Christians and Mussulmans are to live peaceably together.

"I agree with Lord Derby that it would be idle to expect satisfactory proposals from the Porte therefore I have no objection to the Porte's addressing herself first of all to Russia directly, in order to induce the latter to state her conditions.

"But just as, for the above reasons, we still decline to take an initiative towards mediation, so we remain equally determined that peace shall not be made without our participation and that of Europe.

"The danger of a direct conclusion of peace between Russia and Turkey, which may well suit the plans of General Ignatiev, does not seem very probable to us.

"The Porte will hardly assent to the Russian conditions without at least making the attempt to get them softened by an appeal to Europe. It will surely be easy to convince Turkey that it must serve her interests better to make such appeal to Europe, only when she is able to point to tangible signs of the injustice and oppressiveness of the propositions actually put forward by Russia, instead of appealing now on the basis foreshadowed in her late Circular. In the former case, every Guaranteeing Power will be obliged to take up a position in view of those specified conditions, whereas to-day the Powers will be able to reject mediation *en principe*, and will so reject it. If, on the contrary, the course we have sketched out is followed, mediation will follow by itself in the most natural way, and must in one form or the other be brought before Europe.

"We are resolved not to put any obstacles into the way of a peace honourable for Russia, and taking account of her military achievements in such a way as to give her a moral satisfaction; we will even readily contribute to the conclusion of such a peace. But we maintain steadfastly all the points mentioned in our exchange of declarations with England as well as their connexion ('deren Connex').

"We are especially determined not to tolerate the creation of a state of things which would lead directly or indirectly to a predominant position for Russia in the East.

"This is our point of view. We have stated it with the utmost clearness and precision. We, on our side, attach great importance to receive, in the present phase of the crisis, a clear statement about the standpoint taken up by Great Britain. I look forward to your Excellency's reports on this subject at the earliest date possible." (No. 255, p. 145.)

On receiving this despatch from Count Beust, Lord Derby explained that Her Majesty's Government would not feel justified in neglecting any opportunity for bringing about negotiations for peace, and could not, after the urgent appeals from the Porte, abstain from making an effort with that object; but in deference to Count Andrassy's opinion, they would confine themselves, at all events in the first instance, to asking the Porte whether the Sultan is willing that they should ask the Russian Government if the Emperor will entertain overtures for peace. In so doing Her Majesty's Government would be following the policy recommended by Count Andrassy, and Lord Derby hoped that this would prove the earnest desire of Her Majesty's Government to act in hearty co-operation with the Austrian Government in accordance with the understanding between them.

Count Beust said that Count Andrassy thought the best course was, in the first place that the Porte should address itself to Russia directly, but if Her Majesty's Government should think themselves obliged to take some step for mediation in which, for the reasons stated by Count Andrassy, Austria could not join, it would be better that, instead of the course originally proposed, they should simply convey to Russia the willingness of the Porte to enter into negotiations. (No. 248, p. 142.)

In speaking to Sir A. Buchanan* on the subject of the step which Her Majesty's Government proposed to take at St. Petersburg, Count Andrassy said that he was surprised to learn that Her Majesty's Government were under an impression that he had expressed no decided objection to the Russian conditions of peace, as his whole correspondence proved the reverse to have been the case, and it was only when Her Majesty's Government declined to consider them further on Russia proposing to extend Bulgaria beyond the Balkans that he had himself ceased to develop his objections to them.

"He hinted that there were two courses open to Austria-Hungary, either to go hand in hand, as he wishes to do, with England to prevent the destruction of the Turkish Empire and the substitution of Russian power in its European provinces, which he is prepared to do if necessary with the great military resources at his disposal, or he will be obliged to provide for the interests of Austria in a different direction.

"The war, he said, should be terminated by arrangements between the belligerents themselves; but as the position of Turkey, as existing under a European guarantee, is different from that of other Powers, no peace can be made between them except with the sanction and concurrence of Europe, and more particularly of those Powers who are interested in the maintenance of the Treaty of 1856.

"In speaking of the proposal in Count Schouvaloff's Memorandum that Austria should seek compensation in Bosnia and the Herzegovina for the other territorial arrangements suggested, his Excellency mentioned that an offer of these provinces had already been made by the Sultan to the Emperor, and declined by His Majesty; and he said he trusted they would long continue to form part of the Turkish Empire, but the Emperor is the only 'heir' into whose hands they can be permitted to pass if the Sultan's sovereignty expires."

Sir A. Buchanan ends his report of Count Andrassy's language with the following expression of opinion as to his intentions:—

"One thing is, I think, certain, that his Excellency is quite decided to maintain by force, if necessary, in concert with Her Majesty's Government, the interests which it has been agreed to consider as common to Great Britain and Austria, and that he is, therefore, most anxious that no concession should be made to Russia diplomatically which might, in his opinion, weaken the hands of the two Governments hereafter, or diminish their influence as friendly Powers in the Councils of the Sultan.

"I ought to add, also, in explanation of his views, that he considers that the real difficulties of Russia will begin when she wishes to make peace, whether it be on the northern or southern side of the Balkans, and other Powers will have a right to intervene." (No. 287, p. 160.)

In a further despatch Sir A. Buchanan reports that Count Andrassy said "the promises he had received from Russia to respect Austrian and European interests had not yet been broken, and his attitude towards her had consequently never varied;" but when Montenegro commenced hostilities against Albania he had told the Russian Ambassador that Prince Nicholas might carry on any operations he might think fit then, but that at the peace he must be satisfied with the increase of territory which the Powers had recommended the Porte to grant him, and Austria would only recognize him as the Chief of a petty Principality on her frontier permitted to exist on the terms which will suit her convenience.

"With regard to Servia, he also stated to M. de Novikow, in equally distinct terms, that any aggression on Bosnia or the Herzegovina would be immediately repelled by Austria; but as he is unwilling to make a declaration, or take measures which would show a distrust of Russia, he will maintain a strict neutrality until she has clearly shown that she will not abide by her engagements. If however, she is led by her military successes to forget them, as, indeed, it now appeared probable, "*si la poudre lui monte à la tête*," she will find that, while he himself deceives no one, he is determined not to be deceived, and that Austria-Hungary, if he is the Emperor's Minister, will not only insist on the maintenance of the proposals made to her, but will show that she has the power to enforce it.

"He said he had no fear as to the future; that he had been calm while the danger was distant, and is equally so now that it is at hand, and he will await patiently the course of events until the interests of Austria demand his interference.

"He spoke also with confidence of the policy of Prince Bismarck, observing that, although his Highness may render small services to Russia, such as he had just done by preventing a European mediation, he felt assured that he has no intention of sacrificing European interests in the East to Russian ambition, and he believed, therefore, that it would be impolitic to act towards him as if he were unfriendly to the interests of Austria or of England." (No. 288, p. 162.)

The following extract from his reports was read by Sir A. Buchanan to Count Andrassy, who admitted that it fairly reported the opinions and intentions which he had expressed, observing, however, that he had spoken in strict confidence, and requesting that his statements might be kept secret:—

"Vienna, December 20, 1876.

"Count Andrassy said he had hitherto been of opinion, and still thinks, that neither England nor Austria should intervene with a view to stop the war by an offer to mediate between the belligerents; and a safer course would, in his opinion, be for the Porte to communicate to Russia directly her wish to make peace, while it would be at the same time more satisfactory to the military party at St. Petersburg.

"If such a step on the part of the Porte were met by proposals for peace on terms as favourable as she could expect to obtain under the circumstances, so much the better, but of that there is no prospect; and the Porte, when called upon to accept conditions incompatible with her independence and her future welfare, would naturally turn to the European Powers, who have guaranteed the former, and who are interested in promoting the latter; and that England and Austria might then defend successfully the interests of Turkey, as far as they are identical with their own.

"The war, he said, should be terminated by arrangements between the belligerents themselves; but as the position of Turkey, as existing under a European guarantee, is different from that of other Powers, no peace can be made between them except with the sanction and concurrence of Europe, and more particularly of those Powers who are interested in the maintenance of the Treaty of 1856.

"One thing is, I think, certain, that his Excellency intends to act in concert with England to prevent the destruction of the Turkish Empire, and the substitution of Russian power in its European provinces, and that he is prepared, if necessary, to defend, with the great military resources at his disposal, the interests which it has been agreed to consider as common to Great Britain and Austria; and that he is, therefore, most anxious that no concessions should be made to Russia diplomatically which might, in his opinion, weaken the hands of the two Governments hereafter, or diminish their influence as friendly Powers in the councils of the Sultan.

"He appears also to consider that the real difficulties of Russia will begin when she wishes to

make peace, whether it be on the northern or southern side of the Balkans, and other Powers have a right to intervene." (No. 228, p. 163.)

Mr. Layard reported, on the 16th December, that General Klapka had been authorized by the Sultan, secretly, to inform the Austrian Government that Turkey would be ready to cede Bosnia and Herzegovina to Hungary, if Austria would enter the field as an ally of Turkey in the present war. Count Andrassy replied that he did not intend to deviate from the policy which he has deliberately adopted, and which is neither to annex nor to occupy Bosnia nor Herzegovina, and not to permit, if he can prevent it, the formation of any new semi-independent Slav State in Turkey; and he is resolved to maintain the principle of the *status* of the independence and integrity of the Turkish Empire. (No. 261, p. 148.)

On the 28th December, Count Beust asked Lord Derby what answer he was to give to the inquiry in the last paragraph of Count Andrassy's telegram of the 22nd.

Lord Derby said in reply that:—

"So far as concerned the general principles of action by which the two Cabinets would be guided, I saw nothing to add to the exchange of views which had taken place between us some months ago; that we had adhered to the understanding which had thus been come to, and should be ready to act accordingly in the negotiations which were likely to take place. If it were desired to discuss the terms of peace, I thought it would be obviously better to wait until we had ascertained what, on the one hand, the Russian Government intended to ask, and what, on the other hand, the Porte would be ready to concede.

"It would be useless to agree upon proposals which might turn out not to be acceptable to either of the belligerents. If, however, there was any point on which Count Andrassy desired a further exchange of ideas beyond that which had already passed between the two Governments, I hoped he would name it, and I should be willing to discuss the question." (No. 272, p. 155).

At the same time Lord Derby mentioned to Count Beust the mistaken impression which appeared to prevail everywhere as to the real attitude of Austria.

"It was taken for granted, I said, in every European capital, that the three Emperors had acted in concert from the first, and intended to do so to the end, whereas from the communications which had passed between the Cabinets of Vienna and London, it was evident that this was very far from being the case. I did not presume to offer advice to the Austrian Government as to the language they should hold, but it was obvious that we had much less chance of arriving at an amicable arrangement where Russia was concerned if the Russian statesmen remained under what appeared to be their present impression—that they could rely absolutely and unconditionally on Austrian support. I thought, too, that it would be more fair to the Cabinet of St. Petersburg itself that it should be made acquainted with the real position of affairs. As concerned English policy, I observed that it would be difficult for an English Minister to make any public allusion to the prospect of Austrian support, so universal was the impression that whatever was decided upon at St. Petersburg and Berlin would not be opposed at Vienna.

"I concluded by saying that I had offered these remarks in order that he might make such use of them as he thought best, and I relied on his doing so in a manner which would not convey the impression that I was interfering in a matter with which I had no right to deal." (No. 273, p. 155.)

On the 3rd January Count Beust read a telegram from Count Andrassy in answer to the observations made by Lord Derby on the 28th December.

He expressed thanks for the willingness of Her Majesty's Government to concert with the Austrian Government as soon as the Russian conditions of peace were known. Until then he agreed that an exchange of views, beyond what had already taken place, would be a mere discussion "*en l'air*."

With regard to Lord Derby's misgivings as to the supposed understanding between the three Imperial Cabinets, he did not admit that Russia and Germany had any right to say that Austria would always follow their lead, though he admitted that it was true that neither of them had anything to fear from Austria so long as they adhere to the assurances which Austria has received. The Cabinet of Vienna had stated to both Governments in question what were the results of the war which Austria could not accept, and further, that she reserved the right to make her voice heard at the conclusion of peace.

The alliance of the three Emperors, Count Andrassy continued, never had the Eastern complications specially in view. Its object was the maintenance of peace, and in that respect it has rendered substantial services. But where such large issues and such incalculable eventualities are concerned as are involved in the present contest, a previous understanding would have been impossible.

If, said Count Andrassy, *the British Government are compelled to make some statement as to the policy of Austria, they are free to say that the Austrian Government have*

explicitly declared their neutrality to be conditional, and have reserved full liberty of action for the protection of Austrian interests.

Count Andrassy concluded by the expression of a hope that the idea of "some mysterious understanding" between Austria and Russia will be finally dismissed from the minds of the British Cabinet. (No. 303, p. 169.)

On the 3rd January Sir A. Buchanan communicated to Count Andrassy the substance of the Memorandum handed to Count Schouvaloff on the 13th December, respecting Constantinople and the Dardanelles.

Count Andrassy, in expressing thanks for the information, said that Her Majesty's Government were already aware that he did not think it necessary for Austria to take a similar step.

In answer to an observation of Sir A. Buchanan, as to its being rumoured that Austria would not object to the razing of the fortresses in Bulgaria, Count Andrassy said that "Russia is already aware of Austria's serious objections to such a measure." (No. 315, p. 174.)

On the 5th January Sir A. Buchanan, having stated that Lord A. Loftus had no hope of Russia accepting mediation, Count Andrassy replied that the refusal of Russia "would not prevent our taking part in the negotiations for peace as Guaranteeing Powers." (No. 317, p. 175.)

In a private conversation on the 5th January, Sir A. Buchanan having referred to the rumour that Russia had a scheme for establishing a "Gibraltar" on the heights at the entrance of the Bosphorus, and observed that it would be more easy for Austria than for England to prevent this, Count Andrassy replied that as Austria, in case of being obliged to interfere, would act on the rear of the Russian army, it could hold no positions on the Bosphorus against her will. (No. 352, p. 191.)

On the 13th January Count Andrassy informed Sir A. Buchanan that some days before he had caused Prince Gortchakow to be informed confidentially that Austria could not assent to a separate peace between Russia and Turkey, and that the peace to be concluded must be an European one. He was anxious that the Turks should lose no time in getting the Russians to state their conditions. If they are reasonable, the Porte might accept them, subject to the assent of Europe; but it may be presumed that they will not be acceptable, and it will then, on the application of the Porte, be for England and Austria, and Europe generally, to interfere, and state what they can assent to and what they will resist; Austria will then be found ready to maintain what she has said from the first to Russia, and what she has stated in writing to Her Majesty's Government. His Excellency seemed to fear that public opinion in England might have an unfavourable influence on the decisions of Her Majesty's Government. (Sir A. Buchanan, Telegraphic, January 13.)

On the 13th January Sir A. Buchanan was authorized to communicate in strict confidence to Count Andrassy the telegram to Lord A. Loftus of the 12th, instructing him to state that the occupation of the Gallipoli peninsula by Russia would be considered by Her Majesty's Government as affecting their interests.

On the 14th January Mr. Layard reported that he had seen Server Pasha with Count Zichy, at the request of the latter. Count Zichy asked Server Pasha if he was going to the Grand Duke Nicholas with full powers, not only to treat for peace, but to accept any terms, however onerous, that Russia might think fit to impose, without referring to Constantinople.

"The Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs replied that such was the case, the Grand Duke having made it an absolute condition that bases of peace should be accepted before the armistice was discussed, and that in the present critical state of affairs an armistice was absolutely necessary, as the Russians might advance upon Constantinople, and the safety of the Empire was at stake. It was pointed out to the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs that Prince Gortchakow had stated in the most distinct terms to your Lordship that the armistice was to precede negotiations for peace, whilst instructions in a directly opposite sense had been given to the Grand Duke.

"Count Zichy observed that after this grave deception practised by Russia upon Her Majesty's Government, she might put forward terms that were entirely opposed to the interests of Austria and to the Treaty of Paris; and that although Austrian Government, as well as that of Her Majesty, had stated explicitly that they would have a voice in the settlement of the Eastern question, they were now evidently about to be entirely excluded from it. He asked Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs to wait, before agreeing to bases of peace, until he could receive instructions from his Government. The Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs replied that this was now impossible; that Turkey had been abandoned by the Parties to the Treaty of Paris, which Russia was consequently justified in considering as no longer in force, and that he would have to make the best terms he could with Russia, without reference to it or to the interests of European Powers parties to it. Count Zichy will, he tells me, telegraph in this sense to his Government, and will urgently ask for instructions; he expresses great anxiety that we should be instructed to act together." (Mr. Layard, Telegraphic, January 14.)

Count Zichy sent a telegram in the same sense to his Government.
On the 14th January Sir A. Buchanan reported as follows :—

"The Emperor having said to me that it would be now necessary to speak firmly at St. Petersburg to prevent Russia going too far, I observed that I understood His Majesty had already done this, and he answered, 'We are now doing so, and we stated distinctly to Russia, as we have done from the first, "what we can tolerate and what we cannot tolerate," with every wish to maintain our friendship with her.' After dinner, as M. Orczy, who was present, expressed an opinion that armistice will be concluded in ten days or a fortnight, and peace in six weeks, I asked whether he expected that the peace would be one which Austria-Hungary would consider satisfactory, and he replied, 'There can be no peace unless it be satisfactory to Austria.'" (Sir A. Buchanan, Telegraphic, January 14.)

Mr. Layard reported on the 15th that Count Zichy had just received instructions to state to the Porte that Austria has addressed representations at St. Petersburg against the *modus procedendi* of Russia in making the negotiation for an armistice depend upon an agreement between Russia and Turkey as to bases of peace; that Austria adheres to the determination formulated in her answer to the Circular of the Porte of the 12th December last, to reserve her right to participate in definite settlement of Eastern question as a limitrophe and guaranteeing Power; and to warn the Porte not to enter into any arrangement contrary to the Treaty of Paris, and to remind her that even should she do so, Austria will be able to protect her own interests. (Mr. Layard, Telegraphic, January 15.)

Sir A. Buchanan was instructed to communicate to Count Andrassy the telegrams sent by Lord Derby to St. Petersburg and Constantinople on the 14th, stating that in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government any Treaty affecting the Treaties of 1856 and 1871 must be an European Treaty, and would not be valid without the assent of the Powers who were parties to those Treaties. He carried out this instruction on the evening of the 15th and reported that—

"Count Andrassy expressed satisfaction at the language of Her Majesty's Government, observing at the same time that he had been under some apprehension from the inquiry which your Lordship had made to St. Petersburg respecting Gallipoli, that Her Majesty's Government were withdrawing from the position they had previously occupied in the question. He told me that he had yesterday desired the Austrian Ambassador at St. Petersburg to express his painful surprise at the Grand Duke Nicholas insisting on preliminaries for peace taking precedence of an armistice, and he has intimated confidentially that if it is intended to shut out Austria from the negotiations, he would find means of making her right to be heard respected. I asked how he would do so, and whether he was prepared to mobilize army. He answered there are many things he can do, but as a mobilization would be expensive, it would not be resorted to as yet. To the Turks he has intimated that he has always told them that Austria intended to be a party to negotiations for peace as a guaranteeing and neighbouring Power, but that if they think to make peace independently of Austria, she will protect her own interests in another way." (Sir A. Buchanan, Telegraphic, January 15.)

Count Beust communicated on the 16th January a telegram from Count Andrassy on the subject of the English communication to Russia in regard to the Gallipoli Peninsula.

Count Andrassy observed that—

"It appears from this communication that the British reservations are receding at the same rate as events proceed, and in view of the declaration of the Grand Duke Nicholas (which was equally unexpected by the Austrian Government) that the conclusion of an armistice is to be made subject to the previous acceptance of the bases of peace, it would be extremely desirable for the Austrian Government to know whether or not Her Majesty's Government maintains its standpoint that peace shall not be concluded without the participation of the Guaranteeing Powers."

Count Beust was instructed to declare that—

"The Austro-Hungarian Government decidedly maintains that standpoint, and, in general, all its declarations; but that a clear knowledge of the intentions of England will at the present moment be absolutely decisive as regards the line which Austria will pursue."

Count Beust was referred for an answer to the telegram to Lord A. Loftus, declaring the opinion of Her Majesty's Government that no Treaty would be valid without the assent of the Powers (the communication of which to Count Andrassy must have been made after the despatch of his telegram).

He was further informed that Her Majesty's Government are most desirous to act in complete and cordial co-operation with the Austrian Government, and they adhere firmly to the existing understanding with Austria, and are determined to maintain it. (To Sir A. Buchanan, No. 24, January 16.)

A further telegram from Count Andrassy, of which Count Beust communicated on the 16th January a copy, referred to the meeting between the British and Austrian Ambassadors and Server Pasha, and the statement made by the latter that "as the intention of Russia to force the Porte to conclude a direct peace was known at Vienna as well as in London, and as the Porte received no encouragement of any sort from either of those capitals, they must doubt whether the two Cabinets have the will and the power to insist upon participating in the peace negotiations."

Count Andrassy had telegraphed to Count Zichy that the standpoint of the Austrian Government was officially and explicitly stated in the closing sentence of his answer to the Porte's Mediation Circular, that they maintained that standpoint and that a doubt as to their insisting on participating in the peace negotiations was inadmissible. "If the Envoys of the Porte intended to come to a definite agreement with Russia that was their affair, but in that case Austria would be in a position to provide effectually for the complete safeguarding of her own interests as far as they might be affected by the conclusion of peace."

Count Beust asked what answer had been sent to Mr. Layard's account of this meeting. He was informed that it had not been considered necessary to reply to the communication in question, as it had been sufficiently met by the declaration which Lord A. Loftus had made at St. Petersburg, and of which the Porte had been informed.

Count Beust added that he was authorized to state confidentially that the Austrian Government have made a representation at St. Petersburg against the proceedings of Russia in prejudging the peace negotiations by the armistice question. (To Sir A. Buchanan, No. 25, January 16.)

On receiving from Sir A. Buchanan the communication of the telegram to Lord A. Loftus of the 14th January referred to above, Count Andrassy telegraphed to Count Beust that—

"The standpoint of Her Majesty's Government seems to the Austrian Government to be perfectly correct and in complete conformity with the exchange of declarations which have taken place between the two Governments. I hail the step which has thus been taken by Her Majesty's Government with vivid satisfaction." (To Sir A. Buchanan, No. 27, January 16.)

P. CURRIE.

Foreign Office,
January 17, 1878.

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